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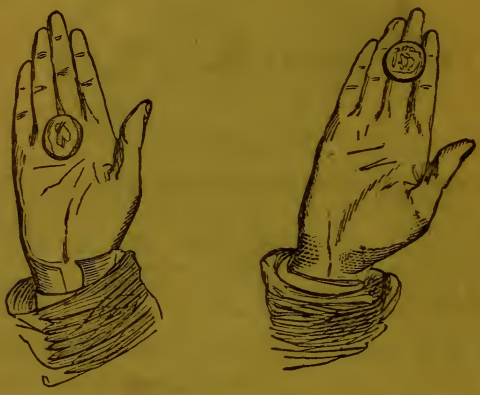

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DICK'S
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LOST AND WON.

By Miss Chapman.

CHARACTERS.

Josephine Morris.	Harry Howard.
Nellie Ray.	Judge Clyde.

SCENE I.—*A Hotel Piazza.*

Enter Josephine *and* Nellie.

Nellie.—How d'ye do, dear? I've been awaiting your appearance with the greatest impatience this half hour or more! It's a beautiful afternoon; don't you think it is, Josie?

Josie (*listlessly*).—I suppose so!

Nellie.—You suppose so! How apathetic you are!

Josie.—Well then it *is*; if a positive confirmation will suit you any better.

Nellie.—It does'nt suit me much better, for it lacks the ring of true appreciation. You're a riddle, Josie; a regular give-it-up conundrum!

Josie.—I don't see why, I'm sure. I was'nt aware that any particular air of mystery enveloped my humble self. Pray explain that speech, if you can!

NELLIE.—Explain it? of course I can! your challenging tone does not scare me a bit. I say again, you are a riddle, and I give you up; and the "because", is, that with every thing to make your life a perfect dream of sunshine and flowers, you seem determined to be apathetic and unappreciative of the good things which dame Fortune has cast into your lap.

JOSIE.—Well really, you have got a list of charges against me! And since you seem to have constituted yourself judge, jury, and witnesses to try this case, and I have no evidence to bring forward in my own favor, I suppose all I can do, is, to plead guilty and throw myself on the mercy of the court. So what is my sentence?

NELLIE (*laughing*).—In consideration of your extreme youth, and the fact that this is a first offence, I will pass but a light sentence—and that is, that you give a full, sufficient, and satisfactory reason for such a state of things.

JOSIE.—Your worship is certainly very lenient. But then, if I must, I must, I suppose; so here goes for a clean breast of it. I know that as far as worldly advantages go, I occupy a very enviable position, and that I have a great deal more than I deserve; that any other girl would be thankful for half of what I was born to; and yet the fact remains, stubborn as true—I am sick of it all!

NELLIE.—Well really! if that is'nt the most astonishing confession I ever heard in my life! I should think any girl in her senses would be satisfied with even the half of your kingdom—not to mention your personal appearance, which I suppose you would not be so willing to divide. You're wonderfully pretty, Josie Morris; do you know that?

JOSIE (*wearily*).—Yes I know it, Nellie; and without any feeling of petty vanity, either, I know everybody says I am handsome, and I dress just as becomingly as I can, in order to make myself appear more so. Every girl does, Nellie; only the majority of them are not candid enough to admit it.

NELLIE.—Well, that's a side issue, altogether, and I'm not going to allow you to slip away from the subject under consideration in this manner, you sly boots! With a month at Long Branch preceded by another at Newport, with your own carriage

and horses at both places, as many signed checks to fill in as you need, and beaux as thick as blackberries in August—and yet sick of it all! Josie, I think you are a monster; and I'm pretty sure that Mr. Howard will arrive at the same conclusion before long if you don't smile a little less coldly upon him.

JOSIE (*aside*).—Thank fortune for the self command I have learned to exercise, or my merry companion might discover the thrill that name always sends to my heart—(*aloud*) Mr. Howard's opinion of me is a matter of perfect indifference, in common with that of the rest of the gentlemen loungers at the Branch, inasmuch as I care nothing for them or their views upon any subject.

NELLIE.—Why Josie, what ungrateful talk! I declare, it is right down slander.

JOSIE.—The gentleman would no doubt feel highly flattered to know that he had so warm an advocate in you. I shall begin to suspect that it is a sentiment warmer than friendship, that makes your tongue so eloquent in his cause, *ma chère* Nellie!

NELLIE (*laughing*).—Spare your suspicions, then, Miss Morris; such a humble satellite as myself, would never dream of aspiring to the full refulgence of such a brilliant constellation as Henry Howard.

JOSIE.—Dear me, how distressingly poetical you are getting of late, Nellie! and people say that it is one of the most infallible evidences of the existence of the tender passion. Do let me presume upon my privileges as a friend, and beg to know his name?

NELLIE.—*His* name, indeed! can inspiration be drawn from nothing save swallow-tailed coats, I beg to inquire? Really, I thought you had more of the leaven of "women's rights" in your composition, than to make such an admission!

JOSIE.—I stand corrected my dear! and promise to do better in future. What volume of poems have you been perusing, then, of late?

NELLIE.—There! you've hit it at last—and if you ask for the theme which afforded such inspiration, you can find it in the generally aggravating and stupid state of affairs existing at the present time. Here you and Harry Howard are so evidently well fitted for each other—been flirting desperately for a month,

too,—the best catch at the Branch, all the girls are just crazy after him—and there is no more reason why you should not get married, than—

JOSIE.—There! stop, do, Nellie, or my patience will be worn threadbare, and I shall say something decidedly cross. Of course when people have money they will find plenty of devotees, whether they possess any brains to back it up with, or not; the all potent presence of bank bills, atone for any and every other deficiency. I declare it's too provoking that a rich girl should be so hunted down.

NELLIE.—That may be the case with some—and a large number, I admit, Josie; but you ought to be willing to acknowledge that there are exceptions.

JOSIE.—I have failed to find any, so far.

NELLIE.—Oh pshaw! I think *I'm* the one to get out of patience, Josie! There's Mr. Howard; the very man we've just been discussing.

JOSIE.—I dare venture that Mr. Howard's views and opinions, exactly coincide with those of his colleagues, in this respect. In what light are we considered by those whom society terms our "gentlemen friends"? Merely as pretty, animated puppets, to be dressed up without regard to expense, and paraded before the eyes of others, very much the same as store keepers put their showiest goods in the most prominent places. As for our being supposed to have any brains, any hearts, or any aspirations above such a tedious, insipid doll-life, that is utterly out of the question. Under the misnomer of "conversation," our ears must be regaled with any amount of vapid small-talk,--because it is'nt supposed for a moment that we have any ideas above such rubbish. And if we show these misguided creatures that we can meet them on their own plane of intelligence, it is at the risk of being denominated "*strong minded*" or "*blue*" from which terrible imputation not even the possession of money would absolve us.

NELLIE.—Josie, I think you have just discovered your vocation; you need'nt talk any more after this of *my* eloquence! if I could deliver myself of such a speech as that, I would take to the lecturing field without hesitation. But I think you are a

little too severe in your strictures upon Mr. Howard. I don't think he's one of that sort.

JOSIE.—I *do*, then! and I despise this aimless, heartless, artificial life from the bottom of my heart, and mean to have no more of it; I tell you, Nellie Ray, I am determined to leave this place to-morrow, where there is nothing but flirting and dressing, and seeing who can most deeply wound another's finest feelings! Talk of Harry Howard! what better is he than a puppet? handsome, talented, I admit; but also lazy, and without a yearning beyond the shade of a neck-tie or the fit of a kid glove. I tell you, I want to live, *really live*, as other people do, once in my life! Will you go with me? anywhere, where Long Branch was never heard of, and Newport will never be!

NELLIE (*aside*).—If Mr. Howard could see you now, you darling, he'd realize what a prize you are!—(*aloud*)—I will follow you to the ends of the earth, oh most potent queen of high tragedy! Do you mean to emigrate to New Zealand, or further up Jersey?

JOSIE.—I'll acquaint you more fully with my plans in the morning.

NELLIE.—I will endeavor to keep my curiosity within bounds until that time. But oh, what a sensation it will occasion among all the lesser stars, when it is discovered that one of their most luminous planets has suddenly disappeared from human sight and ken. [*Exit* NELLIE.

JOSIE.—Poor Mr. Howard! ah Nellie! you little know how every one of your careless words struck painfully on my heart—this willful heart of mine, that despite all I can do, despite the disappointment that has well nigh taken all the attractiveness out of my life, will persist in throbbing so tumultuously whenever Mr. Howard's name is mentioned or his form comes in sight. But I never will marry a man who has no soul or ideas above the trivial society topics and the latest freak in fashions, even though he were as handsome as Apollo and as rich as Crœsus. I'll leave this place for some locality where I can act out the free impulses of my nature, and where no knowledge of my money shall serve as a glittering bait to lure such miserable specimens as have paid court to me here. But there are footsteps; it must

be Mr. Howard; if I risk a meeting with him now, I shall be tempted to say something that I may repent of! [*Exit* JOSIE.

Enter MR. HOWARD.

MR. HOWARD.—Miss Morris! ah! she is not here. I have been too tardy to catch her, or else she has heard my coming and purposely avoided me. Perhaps it is just as well; it spares me the ordeal of parting with her; although it does cost me a pang indeed to think that I must let her go without a word of the love which, despite my disappointment in her, still pleads for liberty to make itself known. But no! I can never take as my wife such a mere butterfly of fashion as she is; never receive for a life-long companion one whose only mental food seems to be the vapid simperings of the young squirts who pay court to her, and to which I despise myself for having descended, although it was the only coin current among these moths. But there is no use in sermonizing out here all night; I'll go in and see what an evening with the poets can do toward assuaging my disappointments.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A country road.*

Enter JOSIE *and* NELLIE *with baskets of blackberries.*

JOSIE.—Now Nellie Ray, what do you think of this? isn't it just the perfection of everything mortal?

NELLIE.—Humph! maybe *you* like it, but I'm blessed if *I* do! I never did so much work for myself in my life as I have this last few weeks; I feel as if our family had experienced sudden reverses and I had been compelled to hire out. I just tell you, Josie Morris, I've got quite enough of rural country life, where one always is in calico and wide-brimmed straw hats!

JOSIE.—Ha! ha! ha! what a piece of aristocracy you are, to be sure, Nellie Ray! That contemptuous sniff at the intensely plebian aspect of your surroundings, couldn't have been given with better effect by a duchess, who by some incomprehensible combination of circumstances, might have found herself suddenly placed in your predicament; it was quite regal, upon my word! ha! ha! ha!

NELLIE (*pouting*).—Oh yes, you may laugh! I dare say you enjoy the pastime exceedingly; and I'm sure I've no objection—every one to his taste—and you always were the most unsolvable of riddles in your notions and opinions. As for me, I feel as if I had been doomed to wear calico for the rest of my natural life, and my hands are getting perfectly ruined! I've half a mind to retract my part of the contract, and make my way back to civilized life, once more!

JOSIE.—I shan't allow you to turn deserter, Nellie. I've just begun to *live*, here; when I want a feast of berries I can go and pick them with my own fingers, and get my nose scratched in the venture, if I please, with the utmost impunity, instead of having them brought to me on a silver waiter and delivered by my humble servant, with such excruciation of elegance and ceremony that it is enough to take away one's appetite for a week. I tell you, Nellie, there is a glorious sense of independence in being able to have one's own hands supply the wants of the body to which they belong, and not to be dependent for the very breath I draw upon the graces of a liveried domestic. Why I can sit down on the grass, here, if I choose, and nobody scandalized, nobody to consult but my own will.

NELLIE (*laughing*).—Well, Josie Morris! if any one had told me that the stately, dignified young lady of Long Branch and Newport, could have been transformed into such a hoyden, I should have thought they were taking leave of their senses. But do let us turn our steps homeward, I want to get this great clumsy umbrella of a hat off my head, so that I can look something like a civilized being!

JOSIE.—Don't slander broadbrimmed hats, I beg, Nellie! remember your five dollar Leghorn, with the crimson roses, and black velvet bows, and yard long ribbons, that you sported at the Branch. Because this brown flat with its one black ribbon only cost fifty cents, where's the difference?

NELLIE.—There's a great deal of difference, to *me*. Besides, there is'nt a specimen of the masculine fraternity anywhere, to see;—not a beau for twenty miles, who would know what we wanted if we attempted to inaugurate a fan flirtation; the few people that these benighted parts can boast of are as ignorant of

any little recreation of that sort as if they were Sandwich Islanders!

JOSIE.—Ha! ha! ha! poor child! you'll have to advertise, Nellie; don't see any other way. *"Wanted, in a secluded village, a young man of prepossessing appearance, well versed in the art of handkerchief flirtations and kindred fashionable sciences!"*

NELLIE.—Its no laughing matter, Josie! I never was intended to be a "country mouse," and don't mean to be one, either, I can assure you, I might *possibly* endure the calico dresses, and the blackberrying, and riding on the hay-wagon, if there were only some gentlemen to enjoy our country comforts with us!

JOSIE.—I commiserate your loneliness with all my heart, *ma chère!* I've no doubt the "Lords of Creation" would feel intensely flattered if they could know how indispensable they are to your happiness!

NELLIE.—Well they *are;* and one might as well be honest about it! I wish Mr. Howard was here.

JOSIE (*starting*).—Well I *don't!* and since you are so perfectly inconsolable for one of the sterner sex on whom to exercise your powers of fascination, perhaps you will appreciate the news which Farmer Miles's wife volunteered this morning—that over at the "big house" that the village boasts, there has arrived a young man from somewhere—Judge Clyde's nephew!

NELLIE.—You don't say so, Josie Morris! how perfectly delightful! Let's go right home and dress and drive past Judge Clyde's. Will you?

JOSIE.—Don't build too high an air castle, Nellie! I'm afraid our efforts in that direction will hardly be appreciated. Mrs. Miles favored me with a voluminous description of the young man's style; and I infer very readily that this Mr. Clyde is one of those grave, reticent men, who especially despise such butterflies of fashion as we profess to be. He's a philanthropist, she says; and *such* a worker, too, on his uncle's estate,—improving the stock and the land,—in fact, Mrs. Miles says he has worked himself nearly into an illness. He has been off recuperating, and has returned.

NELLIE.—Then I consider the last chance I entertained of air-

ing my *lovely* white grenadine, an ignominious failure! Anyway, I'm bound to see him, Josie.

JOSIE.—Talk about a woman not having determination! But what way do you propose to effect it?—send him a challenge to single combat, at—croquet?

NELLIE.—No; he might back out; I'll make the interview a surer one than that. There! I'll tell you, Josie! let's go up to the big house and sell our blackberries! that'll be the gayest lark we've had this summer! What do you say?

JOSIE.—Say? why "yes" of course! you deserve considerable credit for that scintillation, Nellie! Let us start right away; it's early, yet, and that young paragon of a nephew will be very likely to be somewhere around the house, just at this time!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Piazza of* JUDGE CLYDE'S *house.*

JUDGE *and his* NEPHEW *on the piazza.*

JUDGE.—Well my boy, does the old place look attractive to you? the same as it did before you left it to bask in the smiles of the Long Branch belles?

HARRY.—Just the same, uncle, I assure you; if there is any change, it is in your and its favor. I come back to it with a feeling of intense relief, and don't feel as if I should care ever to leave it again.

JUDGE.—Well, that sounds comforting; fashion and fortune haven't quite spoiled you, yet, I see, and I'm heartily glad of it! The place has been as lonely as possible during your absence,—but it seems like home, again, to have you back. If you had known how we missed you, you would have come before your letters began to grow so gloomy. It was some girl or other, I'll be bound, that upset you so. Honor bright, wasn't it?

HARRY.—I may as well be candid, and confess that it *was!* A girl with the face of an angel, and the soul of a sparrow,—whose winning ways drove me mad, while her ambitionless existence, her outrageous pride and vanity, repelled me. Uncle Joe, I couldn't marry a woman like that; one whose whole life

is absorbed in the worship of fashion, who has not a taste or a sentiment above it!

JUDGE.—Did you ever try the experiment with her Harry?

HARRY.—The only experiment I needed was the evidence of my own senses, uncle! I did once or twice advance a sensible remark, but she regarded me with such open-eyed wonder that I was obliged to desist and degenerate into the trivial gossip current among them. I don't know whether most to despise *myself* for purchasing her acquaintance at such a sacrifice of my common-sense and self-respect, or to pity *her*, that such an attractive exterior should have such a scarcity of anything like a living, intelligent soul!

JUDGE.—Why you are a severe critic, Harry, don't you know that girls—or I should say, young ladies—only come into the world, now-a-days, to look pretty, make conquests, and keep "papa's" purse-strings distended to their fullest extent, in footing up their dressmakers' and milliners' bills.

HARRY.—One would think so, indeed, and yet what a degrading view to take of those destined to be our partners for life, and our greatest earthly joy and comfort. I fancy my peerless beauty, if she should see me now, bereft of my fashionable trappings, and attired only as any other man. I can see her aristocratic nose elevate at an angle of forty-five degrees! Talk about our sex being money-worshippers! it's bad enough in a man, but it's altogether unpardonable in a woman! and yet it was my *money* that procured for me an "open sesame" to the smiles and graces of all the fair demoiselles at the Branch.

JUDGE.—Well, I sympathize with you, Harry, with all my heart, and she deserves to lose you, only the pity is she ought to know what she's missed. But who are these persons coming in at the gate.

HARRY.—Fruit peddlers, I guess, by the pails on their arms. Don't trouble yourself to move, uncle, we'll know what they want, presently. (*Aside*) If I could only see Josie, once, in a garb so unpretentious as that, I'd propose to her the next minute (*takes up a newspaper*).

Enter JOSIE *and* NELLIE.

NELLIE.—Now don't be afraid Josie! go right up and ask him.

JOSIE.—Oh, how kind you are! you proposed the plan, and upon your shoulders devolves the responsibility of taking the initiative. Come, let's see how you'll do as an impromptu peddler.

NELLIE.—Very well; here goes, then! only don't you undertake to dim the glory of my achievement by claiming any of the credit—(*stepping forward*)—Will you take my berries, sir?

JUDGE (*bending forward*).—Excuse me! What did you say miss?

NELLIE (*courtesying*).—Would you like to buy my berries, sir? only six cents a quart, fresh picked since sunrise; they're very nice—(*aside*)—bother! that's the nephew, I suppose, with his face buried in his newspaper! Why don't he raise his head and let a body see what he looks like! He must be dreadfully shy or dreadfully ugly—one of the two!

JUDGE.—I like the looks of your berries very much, miss; how many have you? and perhaps your friend has some, too? if I take any it will be the whole lot.

JOSIE (*aside*).—There's no help for it! I must go forward, too, and subject myself to that awful Judge's scrutiny. I declare, I hope his nephew—if that *is* he—won't look up until we make good our escape. I begin to repent having embarked in Nellie's madcap enterprise—(*steps forward*) here they are, sir, but—

HARRY (*looking up—aside—*).—By all the powers! if that is'nt—!—Wait; I'll electrify them!—(*steps forward—*) Perhaps Miss Morris will sell hers cheaper than Miss Ray, on the strength of old acquaintance!

JOSIE (*dropping her pail*).—Mr. Howard!

HARRY (*laughing*).—I hope I don't inspire such horror as I see depicted in your eyes, Miss Morris! Do calm your troubled nerves. I assure you, I am not at all dangerous!

JOSIE.—But Mr. Howard, I—I—thought it was Judge Clyde's nephew. Mrs. Miles said—

HARRY.—Mrs. Miles was quite right—although it may be that she has been a trifle more eulogistic of my virtues than the occasion would justify! I *am* Judge Clyde's nephew;—and may I hope in this new sudden light, equally Miss Josie's friend and Miss Ray's?

JUDGE. (*aside*).—Ah ha! sets the wind in *that* direction? the boy's face is fairly transformed!

JOSIE (*aside*).—If this is'nt the most provoking dilemma a body could have blundered into! but how much handsomer he looks just now, even in that plain suit, than he ever did in the whirl and glitter at the Branch!

HARRY (*aside*).—She hesitates—and it only makes me love her more—the darling! I never knew she was half so attractive before; that plain calico and simple flat serve as such an excellent foil to her beauty. And she cannot be a mere butterfly, either, or she would never be here—a quiet, unfashionable place like this—in *such* a costume!

JOSIE (*aside*).—I'll give him one more chance before I throw away my happiness for ever; for I can't believe that this meeting was the result of mere accident—(*aloud*)—perhaps Mr. Howard may not deem a simple, country berry-girl, so worthy of his acquaintance or friendship, as the popular Miss Morris of Long Branch!

HARRY.—A thousand times more so when the animated and speaking eye betokens the presence of such a spirit within. Miss Josie, let me ask your pardon for having utterly misunderstood and misappreciated you; let me fulfill a vow I made to myself not five minutes ago—let me purchase your berries, and in return for them let me offer—*myself!*

JUDGE.—I declare, how the boy pleads! I'd no idea he was so eloquent before—but Love seems to be a wonderful sharpener of the wits! So this is the *inamorata*;—by what chance has she come to light here, I wonder?

JOSIE (*laughing*).—My berries are pretty nearly annihilated, Mr. Howard! but you seem to take it for granted that I am quite reconciled to the difference in *your* appearance, from what it presented a few weeks ago, at the Branch. What reason have you for such a supposition, I beg to inquire?

JUDGE.—Ah ha! my boy! you're not going to effect a reconciliation so easily! I admire the girl's pluck!

HARRY.—For the reason that I now believe that there is a chord in each of our hearts, that beats responsive to the other; that I feel I have incontrovertible proof that your nature can sympathize and

harmonize with mine to its fullest extent and capacity! Because I *love* you and cannot, will not, consent to live without you!

JOSIE.—And you think the "butterfly of fashion," whose proper food is the mere froth of adulation and gossip, can comprehend any such high flown utterances as these? have you forgotten that they are altogether above the range of her appreciation or intelligence?

JUDGE.—Bravo! she is paying you back in your own coin with a vengeance! You've got to put on all your armor to win the bout this time, Harry, but it's worth the winning!

NELLIE.—Now see here! there is no earthly use in you two people beating around the bush after this fashion! You needn't try to frown me into silence, Josie Morris, for I'm going to give in my testimony in defiance of all consequences! The fact is, Mr. Howard, Josie and you have mutually misunderstood each other—she had the same opinion of you that you had of her, and she became at last so disgusted with the vapid and utterly senseless life at the Branch and kindred marts of fashion, that she came down here to ruralize and live—as she called it!

JUDGE.—And took up blackberry peddling as a means of procuring that same living, eh? ha! ha! ha! I'll engage to buy of both of you all summer!

NELLIE.—No, sir; the selling of the blackberries was a pet project of my own, in order to gain a glimpse at the "splendid young gentleman" at the Judge's house, whose praises Mrs. Miles has been sounding in our ears for the past day or so. Have I degenerated into a hopeless hoyden in your estimation, Mr. Howard?

HARRY.—By no means, Miss Ray, indeed you have unwittingly been the agent in effecting that for which I shall remember you gratefully all my life. Miss Morris, let me express my deep regret for the error into which I have fallen concerning you, and crave your forgiveness. Is it granted?

JOSIE (*aside*).—I can resist him and trifle with my happiness no longer! (*extending her hand*) Freely, Mr. Howard! and I ask the same, on my part, from you!

HARRY.—Josie, your tone emboldens me to make another request. I have your forgiveness, may I not also have your love? your sweet presence in my home as my honored wife?

JUDGE.—Let me add a word in the lad's cause, my dear, for I know now that you are the one who has worked such mischief with his peace of mind, these last few weeks. The boy loves you dearly; and though I say it, is as well worthy of you, as I firmly believe you are of him. Will you not let me welcome you as a niece?

NELLIE.—Come now, Josie, give in! you love him—you *know* you do!—and so have *I* known it, all along!

JOSIE.—Nellie hush! I—

HARRY.—Your radiant face has answered my question, and spoken hope to my heart already! will not your sweet lips confirm it, darling? Let me hear you say—Harry I love you; I will be your wife!

JOSIE.—And you shall be obeyed. Harry I love you; I *will* be your wife! (*places her hand in his.*)

HARRY.—God bless you, darling! and you feel that you can be happy with me?

JOSIE (*rougishly*).—Yes, Harry, provided you promise that during the first year or so of our married life, until I grow more intellectual, you will not converse with me in words of more than two syllables!

HARRY (*reproachfully*).—Josie! I shall not dare to hope that you have forgiven me!

NELLIE.—I think you have given each other ample evidence in this sparring match, that you possess, at least, a moderate allowance of brains! so you may as well make up your minds to endure each other since fate seems to have adjusted her decrees to that effect!

JUDGE.—Quite a commendable piece of advice! pray where did you gain so much wisdom and sagacity, my dear?

NELLIE.—It's purely original, I assure you, sir! it is a peculiar characteristic of mine.

JUDGE.—Indeed! allow me to congratulate you upon being so clever; and also upon the success of your innocent enterprise.

HARRY (*laughing*).—And I must return my acknowledgments for the flattering opinion Miss Ray had formed of my personal appearance, that incited her to embark on this perilous undertaking, which has resulted in such a happy denouement!

NELLIE.—Thank you! and indeed I take upon myself the credit of this reconciliation! I think I may justly claim to be the good genius of all distressed lovers! and that unweaving the tangled skein of unpropitious circumstances, is decidedly my *forte!*

JOSIE.—Mercy, Nellie! if you use many more of those fourteen syllabled words, Mr. Howard will reverse his former criticism, and consider us "blues," of the darkest, most desperate dye!

HARRY.—Well, since we have effected such a satisfactory bargain with regard to these berries, I move that we hand over those that have escaped complete demolition, to the kindly offices of the housekeeper.

NELLIE.—No I thank you, sir! she might make love to the best part of them herself!

HARRY (*laughing*).—Perhaps so, if she thought with me, that the best part of them was their present possessor!

NELLIE.—No compliments to me, sir! Josie has the right of monopoly in that line, now! Just direct me to the kitchen, if you please, Judge Clyde, and I'll soon demonstrate to you that Long Branch belles are not *all* incapable of using their hands to some useful purpose.

JOSIE.—And I insist on being allowed to go and help her!

HARRY.—Then we'll all go, and uncle and I will be spectators! But first let me tell you, darling, of the joy and gratitude that pulsates through my heart to find, that she, over whom as a mere unthinking, trivial butterfly of fashion, I grieved as *lost*, I have, when revealed in her own, true, womanly, attractive character, to my everlasting happiness and contentment,—so happily *won*.

CURTAIN.

RUNNING FOR OFFICE.

By H. Elliott McBride.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Job Johnston, *A small farmer and a candidate for office.*
Mr. Henry Hobbs, *His friend.*
Jacob Zimmel, *Mr. Johnston's man of all work.*

SCENE I.—*A room.* Mr. Johnston *and* Mr. Hobbs *discovered seated.*

Mr. Johnston.—Yes, I hev thought the matter over fur some time, and I hev concluded to run fur County Commissioner. I hev been workin' in the party and votin' with the party ever since I commenced to vote, and I think I ought to hev an office jist as well as anybody else. I am purty well eddicated, and I think I kin hold that office in a right and proper manner.

Mr. Hobbs.—Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston.—Things hev got into sich a way in this county that when a man gets into office he wants to stay there all the time. Now, that's jist the way it is with Tom Raynor, the man who has the office of County Commissioner now. He has had the office fur two tarms, and he wants to git it fur another tarm. I don't believe in doin' business in that way; I go in fur rotatory motion in office.

Mr. Hobbs.—Yes, that's what I go in fur.

Mr. Johnston (*rising and walking about*).—I hev been a hard workin' man all my life, and I think I ought to hev a rest now. I think that this thing of holdin' office should go round amongst the people and not stay all the time in one place. That is, I mean that a few men shouldn't git all the offices and the rest of the people git none.

Mr. Hobbs.—That's jist what I think about it.

Mr. Johnston.—I feel that I hev got enough of an eddication fur to go into the office of County Commissioner. I am purty

sure that I kin do the work which has to be done in and about the office. I am a good deal better eddicated than Tom Raynor. Tom Raynor never had much of an eddication.

MR. HOBBS.—No, I s'pose he hadn't.

MR. JOHNSTON.—I hev had a good deal of experience in doin' business. I have been doin' business now fur twenty-five years, and I know all about how business ought to be transacted. There ain't many men that kin git ahead of me in makin' a bargain. I tell you, Henry, we don't git the right kind of men into office somehow. We git sich men as Tom Raynor. Tom Raynor is a man that has never had any experience of any account. He don't know how to drive a bargain; he don't know how to attend to the duties of his office; he don't know nothin'.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so!

MR. JOHNSTON.—Now, there ought to be sich a man as me in that office. I tell you if I was there things would be different. There should'nt be sich high taxes, there should'nt be any cheatin' and stealin' from the county. I would wake things up and make the rascals flee away.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, you'd jist be the man fur the place.

MR. JOHNSTON.—And I think I'll git the nomination too. I've been electioneerin' some, and everybody I hev talked to seems to be of the opinion that I am jist the man fur the place. I hev been in the party fur a long time and it would be usin' me purty mean if they did'nt give me the nomination.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, it would *so!*

MR. JOHNSTON.—But I feel purty sure I will git the nomination, and when I git it I will hev no trouble in gittin' elected, fur our party always makes a clean sweep in this county.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so!

MR. JOHNSTON.—But I must be movin'. I must up to Rikerville and come down past Hobblestown. I hev a great many friends I want to see, and the time fur the nominatin' convention is comin' purty nigh. I must be a movin' fur I don't want to lose the nomination now, after losin' so much of my time.

MR. HOBBS (*rising*).—Yes, that's so!

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, these are busy times and I must keep movin'. [*Exeunt* MR. JOHNSTON *and* MR. HOBBS.

Enter JACOB, *R.*

JACOB.—Vell, I tinks dot Mr. Shonston has peen makin' too much fuss apout gittin indo office. Now I vould'nt run afder office so much bad as dot. To dell de truth apout de madder, I vould'nt pe poddered vith an office. Dem fellers dot git indo office dey purty nigh always gits to lyin' und swearin' und stealin' und drinkin', und I tinks dey had petter stay at home und nefer mind de offices. Now, I shoost hope dot Mr. Shonston von't git de office vich he is tryin' so pig hard fur to git. If he vould git it he vould not do any more goot,—he vould shoost not addend to his peesness at all. Vhen I am lifin' here I haf to appear to vant Mr. Shonston te git into office, but I ton't vant him a pit a'ready to git into de office. I spose I vill haf to vote fur him pecause if I did'nt und he should find it oud he vould make me leave purty quick a'ready. I ton't vant to leaf here. Dis is von purty doleraple goot place to stay, und I tink I shall haf to vote fur Mr. Shonston und keep on stayin' here.

Enter MR. JOHNSTON, *L.*

MR. JOHNSTON.—Well, Jacob, have you heard the news?

JACOB.—No, I haf'nt heard notings. Vot is de news?

MR. JOHNSTON.—The convention is over and I hev peen defeated—I did'nt git the nomination.

JACOB.—Tunder! Is dot so? Vell, I tinks dot is putty good.

MR. JOHNSTON.—You don't mean that, do you, Jacob?

JACOB.—You can't git indo de office? Is dot vot's de madder?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, they did'nt nominate me.

JACOB.—Vell, vot's to pe done apout it? Vill you kick up a fuss?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, I will. It was downright shabby to use me so. I ought to hev had the office,—fur I've been a great politician and have worked in the party fur twenty-five years.

JACOB.—Vot haf you peen vorkin' at?

MR. JOHNSTON.—You don't understand me Jacob. I have been in the party and hev been workin' fur the party and votin' with it. When a man sticks to a party fur twenty-five years he ought to hev an office. I am not satisfied at all—I won't endure it.

JACOB.—But vot are you goin' to do? How are you goin' to git at fur to kick up a fuss?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Well, I'll tell you. I am goin' to run as an independent candidate.

JACOB.—Vere are you goin' to run to?

MR. JOHNSTON.—O, Jacob, you don't understand English. I am goin' to be a candidate anyhow, and I feel sure I will be elected, fur the people see I hev been shamefully treated. Each party will nominate a man and then I will be a candidate too. That's runnin' as an independent candidate.

JACOB.—Und vot will you do if de beople von't elect you?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Oh, I'll be elected,—you needn't git scared about that. The people see that I have been shamefully treated, and they will rise up in their indignation and carry me triumphantly in office.

JACOB.—Is dot de vay dey do in dis gountry?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, this is a glorious country, and when the people see that there is wrong-doin' goin' on they rise up in their might and put the man in office who is entitled to it.

JACOB.—Und I s'pose dot you is de man dot is entitled to dis office?

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, I am the man and I must be elected. I am edicated and I hev been in business fur twenty-five years.

JACOB.—Den you is shoost de man.

MR. JOHNSTON.—I feel sure that the people will stand by me; they will see that I hev not had fair play and they will rise up and with a great shout they will rush to the polls and elect me to the office which I ought to hev.

JACOB.—Vell, I'd petter go oud und git to diggin' dem botaters. [*Exit* JACOB *L.*

ACT II.

SCENE II.—*Same as first act.*—MR. JOHNSTON, MR. HOBBS *and* JACOB *seated.*

MR. JOHNSTON.—Well, the election is over and I am defeated. And what an awful defeat it is too! I only got ten votes.

(*Rising and walking about.*) I declare this is too bad. I didn't know I was livin' in sich a place and among sich ungrateful people. Why shouldn't I hev had the office? Why didn't the people vote fur me when they said jist to my face that I was jist the man fur the office? It is an outrage to be treated in this way.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so!

JACOB.—Vell, Mr. Shonston, I vould nefer touch a bolitic again. Und if de boliticians vould come aroundt you again I shoost vould knock dem all ofer.

MR. JOHNSTON.—I am an eddicated man, and I am well qualified fur the position and the people of the county all know this, yet when I run fur the office the people turn around and vote fur Tom Raynor and the other man. Some of them have had the impudence to tell me that I should not hev run as an independent candidate.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's what some of them said to me about it.

MR. JOHNSTON.—That's a nice way fur men to talk, now isn't it? Jist as if I didn't know my own business. I believe that when a man gits treated the way I was he ought to rise up and run as an independent candidate. And the people ought all to rush up and elect that man. But in this county the people are all blockheads.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so!

MR. JOHNSTON.—When the people don't git the right man nominated they ought to turn round and vote fur the man who ought to hev got the nomination. But the people here don't know anything. They jist vote fur whoever gits the nomination. They think it would be a dreadful thing to leave the party.

JACOB.—Vell, I tinks dot dis bolitics is a purty droublesome peesness.

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, it is.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so.

MR. JOHNSTON.—I am goin' to stop now. I won't hev nothin' more to do with politics. I won't even go to the polls and vote fur anybody else. I've been shamefully treated—I've been abused.

JACOB (*aside*).—Vell, if he quits de bolitics I s'pose der botaters vill pe petter addended to.

MR. JOHNSTON.—I'm done with politics and politicians; yes, I'm done with them forever. I've been shamefully abused.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so!

JACOB.—Vell, Mr. Shonston, I tinks dat is shoost righd; I wouldn't touch dem nohow. Shoost look at me—I ton't bodder vith bolitics, and I alvays feels purty good. I am shoost von Sharman vot addends to my own peesness, and I feel a good deal petterish as anypody vot bodders himself apout bolitics. This pig fool election is ofer und now I tinks ve can go oudt und git dem botaters raised up a'ready.

MR. JOHNSTON.—Yes, but before we go I want to say a word to the audience.

MR. HOBBS.—That's so! We ought to say a word to the audience.

JACOB.—Vell, I ton't know vot you haf got to say to de audience. I s'pose dey don't care nothin' apout der botaters.

MR. JOHNSTON (*to audience*).—I will never more dabble in politics.

JACOB (*to audience*).—He's shoost righd, but he's goin' to dapple a good deal more in de botater peesness.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's *so!*

MR. JOHNSTON.—When a plain fellow such as I am, gets an idea that he ought to hold some office, my experience shews me that the best office for him, and the one for which he is most fitted, is his own office, his own business; and as to running as an independent candidate, he is only offering one more example of falling to the ground between two stools.

MR. HOBBS.—Yes, that's so.

MR. JOHNSTON.—Oh! you old magpie! Come, Jake—

[*Exeunt* MR. JOHNSTON *and* JACOB, *R.*

MR. HOBBS.—That's *not* so! [*Exit L.*

CURTAIN.

THE UNCLE,

OR,

"COMPARISONS ARE ODIOUS."

BY ELLEN PICKERING.

NOTE.—This, and all the other dialogues by Miss Pickering, illustrate proverbs, and may be performed in either of two ways: (1) They may be given as illustrations of the proverbs, the proverb being announced beforehand; or (2), as originally intended, without previous announcement, in which case the audience should be asked to guess the proverb at the conclusion of the piece. When this plan is adopted the second titles of the pieces should be omitted from the programme.

CHARACTERS.

UNCLE. | SELBY. | NIECE.

The NIECE *turns with mingled eagerness and confusion towards her* UNCLE, *who enters immediately after her*

NIECE.—Well, uncle, well?

UNCLE (*pettishly*).—Well, well, well! That is always the cry with boys and girls, like the eternal jug, jug, jug! of the nightingale.

NIECE (*coaxingly*).—A musical cry, dear uncle, by your own showing.

UNCLE.—Not at all; the jug, jug, jug, of the nightingale would not be thought one note more musical than a tinman's call of pots and pans, if the bird uttered his cry by day instead of night.

NIECE.—Oh, uncle, uncle! how can you talk such treason? The poets and lovers will toss you in a blanket, when they can catch you, for abusing their own peculiar bird.

UNCLE.—Better toss a pancake, that may save them from starving, which is, or ought to be, the fate of such useless creatures as lovers and poets. Peculiar bird, indeed! ay, so it

is, just as idle and worthless, dreaming all day, and making a noise at night.

NIECE (*half affronted*).—Idle and worthless, uncle:

UNCLE.—Ay, idle and worthless, all three of them. Where is the nightingale, lover, or poet, that can furnish a friend a good roast or boil? Who ever got anything from either, I should like to know, except a fit of the toothache or a fit of the yawns from listening to their nonsense.

NIECE.—But uncle, dear uncle!

UNCLE.—Don't dear me, as termagant wives do their husbands when in their most Xantippe moods. Don't talk stuff about the nightingale. Women always talk stuff. A woman, like a Frenchman, never knows when she is beaten, or when to hold her tongue.

NIECE.—I am sure I should know when I was beaten, uncle, so pray don't try: my cries would disprove your assertion.

UNCLE.—It might do you good. A woman,

> "Like a spaniel and a walnut tree,
> The more you beat them, the better they'll be."

NIECE.—Fie, uncle, to use such horrid, musty old proverbs. The new saying is——

UNCLE.—I hate new sayings and new ways. What are they but a fiz, a fuss, and a blow up: and the brains of those who used them, if they ever had any, flying over the country like thistledown.

NIECE.—You have such strange comparisons, uncle. But you are tired, I see: just sit down, and tell me all you have heard.

UNCLE (*taking the seat she hands him*).—Tell you all I have heard? Ay, women are like the lion at Venice, their mouths ever open, ready to receive intelligence of all sorts. Do you think, like Briareus, I have fifty heads?

NIECE.—Well, uncle, I don't want to hear all.

UNCLE.—Well, I tell you again, it is ill. Like a bad barometer, you always say it is fine weather when it is foul.

NIECE (*coaxingly*).—I will be like anything you please, uncle, only just tell me, did you see——? (*pauses in confusion*).

UNCLE (*mischievously*).—See what? A monkey or a raccoon? I saw a goose, if that is what you would know.

NIECE.—No, uncle, you know what I mean.

UNCLE.—Young girls, like half the crack enigmas, mean nothing.

NIECE.—Did you see him, I mean?

UNCLE.—I saw a great many hims; which is your him?

NIECE (*coloring*).—You know very well, uncle, whom I mean —Mr. Selby.

UNCLE.—Oh, Mr. Selby is your him: old Mrs. Crutcheley's him is her do-nothing, good-for-nought, graceless nephew, Jack Hare. All the hims seem much of a muchery.

NIECE (*indignantly*).—Oh, uncle!

UNCLE.—And oh niece! You look like a tragedy queen, when told that her salary is to be lowered, and she is to play the old nurse instead of Juliet.

NIECE.—Oh, uncle! you grow worse and worse.

UNCLE.—Like a stair carpet trampled on every day.

NIECE (*pettishly*).—I am sure it is you who trampled on others, teasing one, day after day; never giving a plain answer, but always making rude comparisons.

UNCLE.—And you, like a note of interrogation, never do anything but ask questions. What do you want to know now, child?

NIECE (*brightening*).—Did you see him, uncle?

UNCLE.—Whose him, yours or old Mrs. Crutcheley's?

NIECE.—Nonsence, uncle: Mr. Selby.

UNCLE.—Yes, I did.

NIECE (*hesitatingly*).—And—and—and—how do you like him?

UNCLE.—Pretty well, as much as a gray headed old rat likes a worrying young terrier.

NIECE (*indignantly*).—Terrier, indeed! I am sure Mr. Selby is not at all like a terrier.

UNCLE.—Don't put yourself in a passion, child, looking like a ruffled hen with one chick.

NIECE.—I am sure Mr. Selby never worried any one.

UNCLE.—Take care, child, that he does not worry you: I am sure he worried me. There was no sit still in him: he hopped about like a parched pea.

NIECE.—I am sure he is not like a parched pea.

UNCLE.—A monkey then, skipping about in every direction, to the peril of my gouty toe, and the ornamental china; or else pacing up and down like an ursine sloth, or some other caged animal.

NIECE (*warmly*).—Monkey, or ursine sloth, indeed! you are always saying strange things, uncle, and making strange comparisons. I am sure Mr. Selby is not like either; every one else says he is handsome.

UNCLE.—

"He's as tall and as straight as a poplar tree,
And his cheeks are as red as a rose;
And he looks like a squire of high degree,
When dressed in his Sunday's clothes."

NIECE (*with a pout*).—He looks like a gentleman in any clothes; and I am sure his face is not vulgarly red.

UNCLE.—No, no; he is as white as a miller's coat, looking just like the little paste pigs at the confectioner's round the corner—a dab of dough with two currants for eyes. Will that content you?

NIECE.—I am sure he is not at all too pale; I hate men with red faces like an ill-painted fiery sun. Every one else thinks Mr. Selby very interesting.

UNCLE.—Oh, yes! as interesting as a Miss in her teens—a perfect Miss Molly.

NIECE.—(*with a toss of the head*).—He is not at all Mollyish; he is as manly as any one, only not so rough, and rude, and disagreeable as some people are.

UNCLE.—Ay, plenty of soft sawder. A piece of perfection! Lovers always are, like a new purchase, till the gilt is worn off a little, and then the pinchbeck shows underneath.

NIECE.—For shame, uncle, for shame! I am sure there is no gilt or pinchbeck about Mr. Selby; he is all pure, solid gold.

UNCLE.—Pure fiddlestick! solid flesh, you mean. But what is the matter with you, child? What do you pant like a pouting pigeon for? Say what I will, there is no contenting you.

NIECE.—Content me, indeed! How can I be contented when you say all you can to vex me?

UNCLE.—Vex you, child? Why, you are as fanciful as a fine

lady who has everything her own way. If the wind is in the north she has a cough—if in the south she is lackadaisical—if in the east she has the megrims—and if in the west she pouts; you may box the compass, but you will never please her. I am sure I compared your lover to all sorts of things.

NIECE.—All sorts of things, truly! Now, don't compare him to anything else, there is a dear, kind uncle, but tell me how you like him.

UNCLE.—How I like him? Why, about as much as a fit of the gout,

"Which cannot be cured
So must be endured."

NIECE.—Endured, uncle! Is that all you say? Mr. Selby is generally considered clever, amusing——

UNCLE (*interrupting her*).—Stop, child, stop! Don't run on like a showman. Mr. Selby is your lover, and of course, as I said before, in your eyes perfect. All lovers are.

NIECE.—Mr. Selby has many virtues in the eyes of others.

UNCLE.—Oh, doubtless! many virtues. He is everything by fits, and nothing long, as I found to my cost this morning; now hopping about like a parched pea on a sounding board, then standing in the centre of the room with his arms extended like an ill-cut statue: one moment sighing away like the bellows of a forge, and the next boring me with a list of your perfections, in the style of one of Pyle's advertisements. Lovers always are the most silly, fantastical, tiresome bores in existence.

SELBY *entering at the moment.*

SELBY.—What are lovers, sir?

UNCLE.—Diamonds without a flaw in their mistress's eyes. A woman in love is never a good lapidary.

SELBY.—But what are lovers in your eyes, sir? Judging from your own words, your experience must have been a sad one.

UNCLE.—Pirates, sailing under false colors, seeming of any mind or performing any action to secure their prey.

SELBY (*good-humoredly*).—You are hard upon us lovers, sir; your fair niece, I trust, judges more kindly, and will not fear to commit her happiness into my keeping.

UNCLE.—Not she, you may be sure: a blind kitten does not fear drowning.

SELBY.—You make strange comparisons, my dear sir.

UNCLE.—Ay, it is very odd, no one is ever satisfied with my comparisons. I gain no more credit than a looking-glass, which tells the truth and shows wrinkles. Men and women are like turkeys; because they choose to shut their own eyes, they think every one else is blind too. Lovers, more especially, are given to this folly—but you might as well talk to a deaf adder (*glancing at his niece and* SELBY, *who are talking, in a low voice, a little apart*). Ah, they are like the babes in the wood, thinking they shall always find berries to eat, and a robin red-breast to make their bed. Yes, yes; there they are, fond and foolish like turtle doves; let them be man and wife, and then see if they don't turn out cat and dog like other married couples.

SELBY.—What did you say about cat and dog, sir?

UNCLE.—Only a slight remark, a sort of a comparison. But it is very odd, nobody ever likes my comparisons!

NIECE.—Much more odd if they did, uncle.

UNCLE.—Hold your tongue, child. Women, like geese, are always cackling; and lovers, like ganders, encourage their noise. comparisons are— [*Exit* UNCLE.

NIECE and SELBY (*together*).—Yes, comparisons *are*—

[*Exeunt.*

CURTAIN.

ALMOST A TRAGEDY.

By Bob O'Link.

CHARACTERS.

Howard Delancy, Mark Mellon } *Dramatic Authors.*

SCENE.—*A sitting room. Table, chairs, writing materials upon the table.*

Delancy, *discovered sitting at table.*

Delancy (*writes*).—Let no man be held responsible for my death....I quit this life....by my own hand....because I choose to do so....I give and bequeath... all my debts....to my landlord....with the distinct.....understanding....that he shall make....no bad use of them." (*speaks*) I think that's about all that is needed. Oh! Anna! Anna! When you hear of my death, you will at least confess that I was worthy of you, and your inconstancy will overwhelm you with remorse! I wonder if I have omitted anything in this my last will and testament ....No, I think not; Oh; yes—

Enter Mellon.

Mellon (*soliloquising*).—As Shakespeare says, Life is a voyage; we travellers pay a high price, and get little in return. It is not surprising that so many seek in the cold waves a cheaper, damper and more peaceful fate.

Delancy (*writing*).—"I further bequeath to my landlord the balance of my year's subscription to the weekly Sun"—well, that's not much, for the time runs out next week—

Mellon.—Hello! Is that you, Delancy? what are you about? Re-writing the seventh act of our new play the "Bandit of Black Band"?

Delancy.—What: doing theatrical work? No indeed! What made you fancy that? No—I am making my Will.

MELLON.—Ah! I see you stick to our proposition.

DELANCY.—Certainly. We arranged for to-night—you don't mean to say that you are going to back out.

MELLON.—I? why, no!

DELANCY.—I don't see very well how you could. You were certainly in dead earnest about it.

MELLON.—And so I am still. (*aside*) Oh! Maria! this is thy work!

DELANCY.—Where have you been?

MELLON.—In my bedroom; I have just had a little nap.

DELANCY.—Asleep! What heroism!

MELLON.—Why not? One has to do *something* to pass the weary hours.

DELANCY.—Ah, well! We two unfortunates, authors in partnership, hissed in partnership at the Star, the Lyceum, and every where else,—there is nothing left for us but to die in partnership.

MELLON.—True, my poor partner! It seems as though there were a horrible plot to dash our hopes and aspirations to the ground. They hissed us! The miscreants! At the Star our magnificent "Bandit of the Black Band" shared the same fate that has befallen many a worse drama.

DELANCY.—And all the pains we took to imitate and even surpass Shakespeare himself!

MELLON.—Shakespeare! What do the public care for Shakespeare now—Pshaw! they want new styles—modern trash! literature in its infant puling stage—

DELANCY.—Did you notice? up in the gallery...

MELLON.—That fat lunkhead who was crowing like a sick rooster?

DELANCY.—Yes, he, for one—and that holy terror of a boy who was barking—

MELLON.—Disgraceful! And when the audience called for the Authors—the wretch who shouted out "Let them put their heads in soak, and give us a rest!"....And in the grand recognition scene—the whelp that called out "Why don't you kiss her? Oh! Ain't he bashful!"

DELANCY.—Can we survive such treatment? No! We will die first!

MELLON.—Yes—we will die! This night shall be the end of our last day. To-morrow, the daily papers will say—"Two dramatic Authors of acknowledged merit,"—why could'nt they say so when we were alive?—"two brilliant dramatists, unable to bear the failure of one of their joint dramas, have voluntarily joined the great majority. We have sent three reporters to ascertain the details;—full particulars in our next, with diagram of the premises."

DELANCY.—Alas! Yes! That was our compact. The die is cast—we'll cast our lots to die! (*pause*). Yes, my dear partner. Life partner hitherto—sleeping partner a while ago, and at last, death-partner. But, how? Ah! happy thought. You remember the six-barrel revolver we bought for protection against house-breakers?....

MELLON.—House-breakers!—much they'd find to rob here! Ha! Ha!!—all-right, old fellow—proceed.

DELANCY.—Yes,—first-rate pistol, you know—more barrels than we need.

MELLON.—To be sure; two will be enough. But how can we arrange it with only one weapon?

DELANCY.—Simple enough! I take the pistol and kill you. Then, you take the pistol and kill me.

MELLON.—That's all very well. But if you kill me first, how can I kill you afterwards?

DELANCY.—Well, well! (*reflectively*) hm!—I did'nt think of that.

MELLON.—I tell you what—I'll kill *you* first, and then you kill *me*;—that seems to me a much better plan.

DELANCY.—Do you think so? (*excitedly*) Oh—what's the use of bothering about it now! we can settle all these trifling details when the time comes. Then we will devise some means which will give us equal chances.

MELLON.—Why, of course. Ah, by the way. we must have some supper before we leave.

DELANCY.—That's a fact! It would never do to die hungry.

MELLON.—Certainly not! Suppose you go and get a nice funeral repast for us both; of course I mean, bring it here. I don't want *my* supper by proxy.

DELANCY.—Have you got any money?

MELLON.—Oh! Never mind money, tell the restaurant man you will pay when you take the plates back, to-morrow morning.

DELANCY.—What! when I'm dead?

MELLON.—So much the better, that will be part of your legacy to your landlord. Spread yourself on the supper, my dear fellow—never mind the expense. We are not dying every day, you know.

DELANCY.—That's so—all right, I'm off— [*Exit* DELANCY.

MELLON.—Oh! If Delancy only knew how much the inconstancy of my Maria had to do with my resolution to die! Faithless Maria! She swore to me that she loved me—me only! but she never would see me unless her mother was with her;—declared she never went any where without her—and only yesterday I saw her at Maillard's with a handsome young fellow—almost hugging him—and no mother *there.* Think of that! and just listen to her last letter. (*takes letter from his pocket and reads*) "Darling Mark"—(*speaks*) Mark that now!—(*reads*) "Everybody is on the tip-toe of expectation to see the 'Bandit of the Black Band'; nothing else is talked of anywhere. You are so talented,—what ever possessed you to have such a stupid partner!"—(*speaks*) I did'nt shew Delancy this letter—it is not always good policy to tell everybody the truth. But, between ourselves, the failure of the piece is mainly his fault. Fancy introducing in one piece seven thrilling recognition scenes! Fact! I overheard a man in the theatre, at the fourth scene, remarking to his companion—"One would think the author came from the back-woods, where there's only one man to the square mile!" (*resumes reading letter*) "Postscript! Whatever you do, don't forget the new hat you promised me. I will give my old one to my mother." (*speaks*) She's a good girl anyhow, she thinks of her mother. (*reads*) "Till death, your own Maria."
(*crushes letter angrily*) What assurance! What everlasting—Ah! here comes Delancy—(*tragically*) I must dissemble!

Enter DELANCY, *with basket.*

DELANCY.—Back again—haven't I been quick?

MELLON.—You have. (*dramatically*) 'Tis well!

DELANCY.—I hope you will find everything satisfactory.

Come, help me unload the basket. Our last meal—poor fellow !. Here, take this pumpkin pie—(MELLON *places the articles on the table as* DELANCY *hands them to him*). Here's a roast goose!

MELLON (*takes it*).—Reminds me of our poor piece—how they hissed !

DELANCY.—Potatoes,—figs—cheese—bread—coffee—and a pint bottle of Chartreuse with which to drink to each other's health—No—I mean—demise.

MELLON.—Now that's what I call a supper—you've done splendidly.

DELANCY.—Wait a moment, I'll put the coffee-pot on the stove in my room, to keep it hot— [*Exit with coffee-pot.*

MELLON.—A first rate supper—that will give us strength for what is to follow—(*sadly*) Oh, dear! it seems too hard—in the full vigor of one's life—Oh, it's—

Enter DELANCY *quickly.*

DELANCY.—Every thing is ready—now let's sit down. First, just a nip of the Chartreuse—(*pours it out, both drink*) Ah ! that's good—Now for the goose (*carves and helps it, &c.*)

MELLON.—And to think that—to-morrow—

DELANCY.—Oh ! stop *that*—time enough after supper (*hands him plate*), help yourself to potatoes. (*sings*)

"We'll drown it in the flowing bowl"
We'll—

MELLON.—Oh—how can you sing at a funeral meal?

DELANCY.—Tis the dying note of the moribund swan ! .(*sings*)

So drink to me only with thine eyes
And I will pledge—

MELLON.—Oh! hush—you drive one frantic—Come, fill my glass once more—that is, if you've left me any. Thanks.

DELANCY.—Lend me—

MELLON.—Lend you anything, except money.

DELANCY.—Lend me your ears, and pay attention to me. Our last moments should be sacred, and no secrets from one another. You must know, then, that I have a sweetheart who has frightfully deceived me. In fact *that* has fully as much to do with my determination to die, as our failure in the theatre. Fill up my glass again—Thanks. Here's to my false Anna! (*drinks*) Anna—who never goes any where without her mother—

MELLON (*aside*).—Curious—nor does Maria.

DELANCY.—Well! the other evening, at Maillard's—who should come in but—Anna—no mother with her *then*—Oh, no! only a fine looking young fellow—

MELLON.—I pity you, my dear fellow; but, by a curious coincidence, I love a little girl—who played exactly the same trick on *me*,—(*drinks*) here's to faithless Maria! And, just as you say, she is the principal cause of my deciding to die—to leave a world which is full of failure and perfidy. Give me a little bit more goose, for pure revenge.

DELANCY.—Indeed I am sorry for you—But, look here—(*takes letter from pocket*) here's a letter I got from Anna a few days ago. (*reads*) "My own Howard,—Please get me two front seats for the opening night of your new piece. You are so talented—why was it necessary to have any aid from"—(*stops*)

MELLON.—Proceed.

DELANCY.—No, I cannot—

MELLON.—Between partners?

DELANCY.—Well, if you insist—(*reads*) "aid from such a perfect simpleton as—

MELLON (*aside*).—Very strange—the same idea.—

DELANCY.—"As your dramatic partner. Whatever you do, don't forget my new hat."

MELLON.—What a craze the girls seem to have for new hats!

DELANCY.—Alas, my poor friend! What is there in life worth living for?

MELLON.—Nothing.

DELANCY.—Love is an ignis fatuus—

MELLON.—A snare.

DELANCY.—We are a very Siamese twins in misfortune.

MELLON.—A dreary reflection, but too true. Hissed by the public—deceived by our only loves—(*pause*)

DELANCY (*dreamily*).—This Chartreuse is delicious.

MELLON (*smacks lips*).—Ah! fine!

DELANCY (*rousing up*).—Mellon—my boy—now let us make our arrangements.

MELLON.—What's your hurry? There's plenty of time. (*A thundering knock is heard at the door.* BOTH *spring up.*)

BOTH (*dramatically*).—Ha! What's that? What ho, there!

DELANCY.—That sounds like our Landlord's knock—Our rent! Ha! Happy thought! (*claps* MELLON *on back*) we'll tell him we will pay him to-morrow.—

MELLON (*laughs*).—Ha! Ha! Good!—that will be the last installment of your legacy to him. But look! A letter slipped under the door—

DELANCY.—So there is. What can it be? Let's see. (*picks up letter*) Ah! Grand Opera House on the envelope.

MELLON.—That's where we offered our new fairy drama in sixty-seven scenes. Read it! Oh! be quick!

DELANCY (*opens letter*).—From the Manager. (*reads*) "Dear Sirs, I have the pleasure of announcing to you that your fairy drama has been accepted"—.

MELLON.—Accepted!

DELANCY.—Saved! (*reads*) "upon the sole condition, however, that the authors will have"—(*speaks*) Eh? What's this? —(*reads slowly*) "will have to pay all expense of costumes, scenery, and salaries"—(*amazed, drops the letter*).

MELLON (*astounded*).—Is—nothing said—about the rent of the theatre? (BOTH *drop into their seats at table.*)

DELANCY (*sepulchrally*).—Give me some cheese. (*takes a piece*) No! My emotions choke me. Oh! Anna! Anna! for thee I die!

MELLON.—Oh! Faithless Maria! (*pause*)

DELANCY (*mournfully*).—Come, let us toss up.

MELLON.—Toss up? What for?

DELANCY.—To decide which of us two—

MELLON.—Oh! There's time enough. (*groans, pause, starts up*) Ha! our coffee! I cannot die without my coffee.

DELANCY (*starts*).—Forgot all about it. I'll fetch it.

[*Exit* DELANCY.

MELLON.—To die! the very thought sends a cold chill through me. Oh! If Delancy would break his neck—scald himself—anything to lay him up for a month.—But no, the fates are relentless—he returns.

Enter DELANCY.

DELANCY (*cheerily*).—Here we are! Fragrant and piping hot!

MELLON.—Pour it out (*takes cup*). Thanks.

DELANCY.—Mellon! Mark! Brother! (*clock strikes twelve*) List! The hour is come.

MELLON.—That's the clock upstairs—it is always half an hour ahead of time.

DELANCY.—Mellon, the eyes of all posterity are upon us.

MELLON.—Posterity is pretty well all asleep by this time.

DELANCY.—Never mind. Let us settle all the preliminaries, so that I can at least enjoy my coffee with a tranquil mind.

MELLON.—I have not a single coin left to toss with. Have you? (*aside*) I bet he has borrowed a cent on purpose (*aloud*). Howard! are you actually serious?

DELANCY (*takes coin out of pocket. Tosses a cent; holds it flat between his palms*).—Head or tail?

MELLON.—How you are rushing things!

DELANCY.—If you call "heads" and it is tail, it will be for me to—

MELLON.—And yourself afterwards?

DELANCY.—Why of course. But if you call "tails"—

MELLON.—Oh, you confuse me entirely—Well—heads!

DELANCY (*aghast*).—Heads it is!

MELLON.—My poor friend! So I shall have to—

DELANCY.—Ah—yes—but there's plenty of time.

MELLON (*picks up pistol*).—Oh! insignificant but potent toy! thou passive arbiter of destiny—come—let me clutch thee!—

DELANCY.—Take care! it's loaded—it might go off—don't point it this way. (*drops on hands and knees.*)

MELLON.—Come—finish your coffee.

DELANCY.—What a hurry you are in! Are you absolutely and irretrievably resolved?

MELLON.—What? After Maria's treason!

DELANCY.—Oh! Anna! and you too!

MELLON.—Ready? (*raises pistol.*)

DELANCY (*dodges behind table*).—One moment! There's some Chartreuse left—we *must* finish the Chartreuse—(*pours it into the glasses, drinks with trembling hand*) Ah! that's good—

MELLON (*drinks*).—Yes—excellent. Are you ready, at last?

DELANCY (*desperately*).—What must be, must; I suppose—

but (*walks up to* MELLON, *turns pistol aside*) this is all very fine for *you*—how do I know that after you have—(*points to himself*) you will (*points to* MELLON.)?

MELLON.—Rely upon my untarnished honor!

DELANCY.—But, my dear fellow, it cuts me to the very heart that I may possibly leave you in this world of misery and blight—oh—that would be too sad for you.—Why can we not take the final plunge together, hand in hand?

MELLON.—You need not worry yourself about me—

DELANCY.—Well—let's finish—let me at least assume a dignified pose (*poses extravagantly*).

MELLON.—Oh—not that way—like a stuffed monkey—

DELANCY.—I am ready—no—stay—let me turn my back to you. I cannot be an eye witness to your crime—(*a terrific kick is heard at the door.* DELANCY *springs in the air, falls flat*) I'm dead!

MELLON.—Get up! you're crazy—that was only a knock at the door.

DELANCY (*gets up, feels himself all over*).—Eh? What? a—knock at—the door! are you dead sure I'm not dead?

MELLON (*laughs*).—Sure enough—see—there's another letter under the door.

DELANCY.—A letter! Quick—

MELLON (*picks up letter; reads*).—"Glorious news! I have just succeeded in getting your "Follies of a Night" accepted by the "Bijou" and—

DELANCY (*reading over* MELLON'S *shoulder*).—But—the letter is from Anna! I know her writing.

MELLON.—Nothing of the sort—it's from Maria!

DELANCY.—I tell you that's Anna's writing! I know it—she always spells accepted with an "*x*"—

MELLON.—I know Maria's writing excellently well—her own ecstatic, extravagant, eccentric way of spelling, extraordinarily expressed.

DELANCY.—She's both! see—she has signed the letter Anna Maria!—Oh! Anna!

MELLON.—Oh! Maria!

BOTH (*tragically*).—Anna Maria!

DELANCY.—There's one thing plain enough, she gave *me* the better half of her name. By prior right, she's mine!

MELLON.—Yes, till she saw *me*, and certainly threw you over for *me*. Better half of her name! You're welcome to it, but the girl herself shall be my better half, she's mine!

DELANCY.—Yours! Pshaw! You make me laugh (*laughs satirically*).

MELLON.—Puppy! Come here and let me kick you!

DELANCY.—*Avaunt!* Our partnership is dissolved—Rivals, rivals to the bitter end. Now! Murder me if you dare! (*snatches pistol from* MELLON) thus I disarm you (*snaps the trigger six times*) confusion—insult on injury—it was not loaded—and you have dared to play me such a trick–

MELLON.—Come, now—moderate your fury. Partners we have been—partners we remain. Our joint deceiver—Anna Maria—can deceive us both only *once*. Scorn her and let her go—

DELANCY.—Agreed;—life-partners henceforth—but no more death-partnerships—

MELLON.—No—Life is still worth living—(*turns to audience*) even if *you* hiss us—

DELANCY (*to audience*).—

We hope for hissing us *you* find no cause—
At least encourage us with your applause.
We've done our best, it might have been much worse.
Kind friends! We've dared before you to rehearse
Our last new farce. (*to* MELLON) It's name! What shall it be?

MELLON.—Just what it is—

"ALMOST A TRAGEDY."

CURTAIN.

LOVE'S LABOR NOT LOST.

By H. Elliott McBride.

CHARACTERS.

Tom Jones, *A Bootblack.*
Dave Ray, *A Newsboy.*
Mrs. Nora Mecaffery.

SCENE.—*A room scantily furnished.* Tom *discovered.*

Tom.—Well, I am of the opinion that we are in straightened circumstances. I have but ten cents and there is'nt a bite of bread in the house. It may be that Dave has made more money than I have to-day; if he has'nt we shall not have enough money to buy a respectable supper. I am a bootblack and Dave is a newsboy, and I am now inclined to think that selling papers is a better business than blacking boots. Then the question arises, had'nt I better stop blacking boots, and go to selling papers? Dave is'nt a bit mean or stingy, and he says it is all right; he says we have formed a co-partnership and he is'nt going to try to break up that partnership merely because he makes a few more pennies in a day than I do. Dave is a noble fellow. These are hard times for me. People now go with their boots unblacked or black them themselves. I'm sure it would be a great help to me if the rich men would allow me to black their boots, and they would never miss the small amount paid out. I am willing to work, but, somehow I can't get enough work to do. We'll have to do something soon to make some money, for the rent is due and old Jackson won't wait very long. If winter was'nt coming on Dave and I could give up the old room and live on the street, but that is'nt to be thought of now. I don't want to freeze and so we had better try and keep the room.

Enter Dave, *R.*

Dave.—"Home again from a foreign shore."

TOM.—How did you get along to-day, Dave?

DAVE.—First rate. I made one dollar and five cents to-day.

TOM.—A dollar and five cents! Good! What made the papers sell so well to-day?

DAVE.—Oh, there's been another murder somewhere out in the country.

TOM.—And everybody wanted to read about it. They were so much interested in the murder that they would'nt have their boots blacked.

DAVE.—Did'nt you get anything to do?

TOM.—Yes, I got one very large pair of boots to black.

DAVE.—Only one pair?

TOM.—That was all. I tell you, Dave, I must learn to be a newsboy too, or we must dissolve. I don't think it right for me to share with you when you make a dollar a day and I make only a dime.

DAVE.—Pooh! don't trouble yourself about that, Tom. Don't you know you used to make more money than I did?

TOM.—Not very often, Dave.

DAVE.—Tom, I won't allow you to speak of such a thing as a dissolution of partnership. I could'nt get along without you. We have messed together now for nearly two years and I don't want to keep house unless you stay with me.

TOM.—I'd like to stay, but I think it is'nt quite right when you are making all the money. But, I'll tell you, Dave, what we can do; you keep your money and I'll keep mine.

DAVE.—No *sir!* When we entered into our co-partnership the agreement was that we should throw our money all into the same purse, and out of that purse the rent should be paid and provisions purchased. That's the agreement. I am not going to break with you just because people don't want their boots blacked.

TOM.—Dave, you are an excellent fellow and—

DAVE.—There, Tom, don't say anything more. You may make me think I am good enough to run for Congress. But, Tom, I have something to tell you. Somebody lost their pocket-book to-day.

TOM.—And did you find it?

DAVE.—I did. I found it on Washington street as I was coming home. I put it in my pocket and hav'nt looked at it since. (*Takes out pocket-book.*)

TOM.—Oh, I hope there's a hundred dollars in it. Open it up and let us take a look at it.

DAVE (*opening pocket-book*).—Here's money—plenty of it (*taking out bank notes*) Ten and twenty, thirty, and five and five, and ten and goodness! here's a hundred dollar bill. I believe that's the first I ever saw.

TOM.—Oh! is'nt this glorious? One hundred and how much?

DAVE.—One hundred, and then ten and twenty make thirty and five make thirty-five, and five make forty and ten make fifty. One hundred and fifty dollars.

TOM.—Oh, we can pay the rent now.

DAVE.—Has old Jackson been after the rent?

TOM.—Yes, he was here to-day. He says it was due a week ago. And if it is'nt paid soon he'll kick us out. Let him kick us out now, if he wants to; we can go to a better place.

DAVE.—But, Tom, this money is'nt ours.

TOM.—Of course it's ours, or rather, I should say it is yours. Did'nt you find it?

DAVE.—Yes, I found it, but I don't know as that makes it ours.

TOM.—Of course it does. It's likely some stingy old fellow lost it—somebody that is too stingy to get his boots blacked. He will hardly miss it and it will be such a great help to us—to *you*, I mean.

DAVE.—I'm afraid my Sunday school teacher wouldn't approve of my keeping it.

TOM.—Pooh! who cares for your Sunday school teacher? I guess he'd keep it himself if he had it.

DAVE.—Oh, no; I don't think he would.

TOM.—Keep it anyhow, Dave, and don't say anything about it. You know you need it. You could get into some kind of business on that one hundred and fifty dollars.

DAVE.—I know it would be very nice to have it; I could start a news stand with it and make plenty of money; but I guess it wouldn't be quite right to keep it. (*Knock at door.*) Who can

that be? (*Puts pocket-book in his pocket, goes to door and opens it.*) Ah! is it you, Mrs. Mecaffery? Come in.

Enter MRS. MECAFFERY, *L.*

MRS. MECAFFERY.—An' how are yez gettin' along, me b'ys?

DAVE.—Oh, very well, I made a dollar and five cents to-day.

TOM.—And I made ten cents (*places a chair*)—Sit down, Mrs. Mecaffery.

MRS. MECAFFERY (*seating herself*).—Thin it was a bad day fur the blackin' av boots!

TOM.—Yes, an awful bad day.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Mr. Jackson was after the rint to-day, was'nt he?

TOM.—Yes, he says it is due and must be paid or he'll kick us out.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Oh! what onfalin' hearts some paple hev got. An' kin yez pay the rint?

DAVE.—No, we can't unless—

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Onless what, honey?

DAVE.—Mrs. Mecaffery, if you should find some money would it be right for you to keep it?

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Faix, no, honey. Niver do nothin' but what is right. An' jist ax yerself the question is it right to kape what is'nt yer own? Did you find some money?

DAVE.—Yes, I found a pocket-book to-night containing one hundred and fifty dollars.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—An' is there nothin' in it to tell ye whose it is?

DAVE (*taking out pocket-book*).—I can find nothing.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Thin ye must be afther huntin' up the owner. Ye had betther put an advertisement in the paper about it. Ye would'nt be afther kapin' it I spose'?

TOM.—Is'nt it Dave's when he found it? I guess some rich man lost it and he does'nt need it half as bad as Dave does.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Ah, me b'y, the findin' av it does'nt make it Dave's. A great many paple kape money an' sich things whin they find them, but that does'nt make it right. Oh, no, not at all. An' w'ud ye be afther kapin' the money?

TOM.—Yes, I would keep it if I had found it.

DAVE.—I had almost decided to keep it, but I now think it would not be right.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—No me b'y, it w'ud not be right. Ye hev both been good b'ys an' I take an intherist in yez an' I'd fale bad, indade, if I should find out that yez was'nt honest.

TOM.—But the rent is due and how are we going to pay it if we don't take the money?

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Betther let it go unpaid than to take another person's money to pay it wid. Trust in Providence, me b'ys, an' do right, an' He will niver allow yez to stick.

TOM.—It's all very well to talk, Mrs. Mecaffery, but I don't like to see some of the people in this world get all the comforts, and others, just as good, get nothing. And I think when a pocket-book is taken from a rich man and given to a poor boy, the poor boy ought to keep it.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Not at all—not a bit av it. It has'nt been given to a poor b'y; the poor b'y just found it. Do right, me b'y, that's the way to do. An' don't fly in the face av Providence an' grumble an' complain about His works. If He makes some poor an' some rich, it is right, an' ye should'nt find fault. But, me b'ys, I'm not goin' to let yez stick. I hev a little money an' yez shill hev some to pay yer rint.

DAVE.—O, Mrs. Mecaffery, we can't take any more of your money. You have helped us already.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Yis, an' I can help yez again. (*takes out money*) Yis, ye must take it. I will lind it to yez to pay the rint an' yez can pay it back to me afther awhile. Find the owner of the pocket-book an' take it back to him an' my word for it, ye'll fale betther than ye w'ud if ye'd kape it.

DAVE.—Yes, I'll return the pocket-book; I am determined to do that. And we will accept of your money too, as a loan.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—That's right. (*hands the money to* DAVE.) Ye're sinsible b'ys an' I hope ye'll rise in the world. When will ould Mr. Jackson be back for the rint?

TOM.—He said he would be here again in two days.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—All right; yez can pay it now. (*rises*) An', me b'ys always do right an' thin yez can ask God to bless yez. Good night.

DAVE AND TOM.—Good night. [*Exit* MRS. MECAFFERY *L.*

DAVE.—What do you think about keeping the pocket-book now, Tom?

TOM.—I guess Mrs. Mecaffery is about right. But when people get into tight places they don't stop long to consider what is right and what is wrong. Or rather, I might say, when people are worried and troubled about money matters they do that which they would not think of doing at other times. I suppose I would not have thought of keeping the money if this awful rent had not been troubling me. I did not want to have to go out and lodge in the streets now that the nights are getting so cold.

DAVE.—Mrs. Mecaffery has helped us out of that difficulty. She must have a good deal of money.

TOM.—Yes, I suppose she has. And when we get a little older and get into business we will be very ungrateful if we do not remember her for all her kindness to us.

DAVE.—Ah, we must remember Mrs. Mecaffery and take care of her in her old days. She has been our best friend.

[*Exeunt R.*

SCENE II.—MRS. MECAFFERY *seated.*

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Oh, this is nothin' but a world av trial an' trouble an' sickness an' pain. Whin our money is gone our frinds lave us an' go out an' look fur somebody else to stale from. Shure now, an' I w'ud hev been purty well off in this world if I had'nt lint me money to Dennis Rafferty, an' he said he c'ud make the money double itself in a very short time. But the money is all lost an' Dennis is 'as poor as mesilf. An' now I s'pose I'll hev to go to the poor house an' be knocked around in me ould days. Och, now, an' it is hard fur me to go there whin I had been savin' up a little money all me life jist to be sure that I w'ud'nt come to want. I ought niver to hev lit Dennis hev the money—I ought to hev hild on to it. But it's gone an' I ain't able to make ony more. This rheumatism that I hev kapes me from movin' about or ilse I'd be up an' a thryin' to do somethin' (*knock at door*) Who can that be? I guess it's the landlord after the rint. Well I can't pay it an' I suppose I must go out

av the house. Come in. [*Enter* DAVE *and* TOM.

DAVE.—I suppose you know us, Mrs. Mecaffery? (*goes up to her and extends his hand.*)

MRS. MECAFFERY (*shaking his hand*).—Well if it is'nt Davy an' Tom. How do yez do b'ys?

TOM (*taking her hand*).—We are well and doing well. We have remembered your kind instructions.

DAVE.—But *you* are not well. Are you troubled with rheumatism again?

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Yis, yis, it is throublin' me considerable, but there is somethin' that is throublin' me more than that.

TOM.—And what is that, Mrs. Mecaffery?

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Sure, an' I've lost me money. It was'nt a very great amount, but thin it was enough to live on. I lint it to Dennis Rafferty an' he said he could make it double itsilf in a short time, an' I gave it to him, an' now I suppose I will have to go to the poor house.

DAVE.—You shall never go there, Mrs. Mecaffery.

TOM.—Never!

MRS. MECAFFERY.—But how shill I kape from goin' whin me money is all gone an' I have nothin' to live on? I hain't got no relations to go to, an' I will hev to lave here soon fur I can't pay the rint.

DAVE.—If you have no relations you have friends.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Niver a friend. There was the Boley family an' I thought that they'd be my friends, but as soon as my money wint they wint too.

DAVE.—Mrs. Mecaffery, Tom and I have got good positions now and we owe it all to you. We are making some money and while we have money you shall never go to the poor house. We will keep you.

TOM.—Yes, Mrs. Mecaffery, that's so.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Sure, now, an' that's nonsinse yez are talkin'. Have'nt yez enough to do to kape yersilves?

TOM.—We can keep you, Mrs. Mecaffery. We have got good places and are making plenty of money.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Well, yez must be makin' money fur yez are purty well dhressed.

DAVE.—And we owe it all to you. It was you who got our places for us.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Sure, now, an' yez were always truthful b'ys, but yez must be misthaken about that. Whin did I iver go out to hunt a place fur yez?

DAVE.—You remember the pocket-book I found?

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Yis. An' ye took it to the owner?

DAVE.—Yes; but we would have kept it if you had not talked to us about the matter and counseled us to return it. We did so, and the owner wished us to take fifty dollars as a reward for our honesty. We refused to do so, but told him we would like to get into some kind of business at which we could make more than in blacking boots and selling papers. He immediately gave me a place in his store and found a situation for Tom. We have been in our new places for two months and like them very well. We would have come to see you long ago if we had known you were in trouble. But you must leave this place now. We will find a better home for you. Won't we Tom?

TOM.—Indeed, we will. Mrs. Mecaffery, as long as we have any money you shall not want for anything.

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Oh, me b'ys, how can I thank yez?

DAVE.—Rather should we ask, how can we thank *you*? You were the means of securing our situations for us.

TOM.—And we would be very ungrateful if we did not endeavor to return the kindness. (TOM *stands at one side of* MRS. MECAFFERY *and* DAVE *at the other.*)

MRS. MECAFFERY.—Ye are noble b'ys—excellent b'ys, an' may God bless ye fur yer kindness to me.

DAVE.—Not another word, Mrs. Mecaffery; you planted the seed, and the harvest should be yours—You have fairly proved that—

TOM.—"LOVE'S LABOR IS NOT ALWAYS LOST"

CURTAIN.

WANTED—A NURSE.

By Gustav Kobbe.

CHARACTERS.

Agnes Daingerfield, *in plain house dress.*
Fanny Thompson, *in walking dress.*
John Thompson, *an Englishman, her husband.*
A Maid.
A Policeman.

SCENE.—*Cosily but not expensively furnished parlor in the top story of a flat-house in New York. To the left a portion of an adjoining smaller room is seen through portières. A door in the background leads into the hall. There must be a sofa, a centre table and a chair, the sofa being in the foreground, and the chair near it.*

Agnes (*on sofa, engaged in some feminine handiwork. Her glance falls on a newspaper beside her. Something in it seems to attract her attention, Drops her work and takes up the newspaper*).—What's this? "Alone with a madman!" That's a startling heading. (*reading from paper*) "While Mrs. Spencer, of 1402 Arch street, Philadelphia, was sitting in her parlor yesterday afternoon a ring at the door bell was heard. The servant, on opening the door, saw a well dressed man, who asked for Mrs. Spencer. Thinking him a friend of the house, the maid showed him into the parlor. Mrs. Spencer's surprise may be imagined when she saw a total stranger. But her surprise gave way to alarm when he approached her and asked, 'How soon will you be ready to go with me?' for something in the man's looks and manners led her to conclude that he was mentally unsound—an impression which was confirmed when he proceeded to ask her a number of peculiar questions. With great presence of mind, Mrs. Spencer answered these questions calmly, and when he finally repeated his first question, 'How soon will you be ready

to go with me?' replied, 'Right away, sir.' Leaving the parlor with him, she opened the front door. When they were outside she hastily retreated back through the door, which she had left ajar, and slammed it in the madman's face. After ringing the bell furiously awhile he left. Mrs. Spencer says he was tall, of dark complexion, good looking, well dressed, and spoke with an English accent. A man answering Mrs. Spencer's description of the intruder was seen in the afternoon in the Pennsylvania Railroad depot, and the police think he took the train for New York. The New York police have been notified, and are on the lookout." That's a pleasant experience. But perhaps it's only a newspaper story (*throws down the newspaper and resumes her work*). Dear me, it's nearly three o'clock, and no nurse has come yet. I'm sure the advertisement read they were to call from 11 to 3. It was clear enough. "Competent Infant's Nurse. Apply from 11 to 3, at 109 East Forty-ninth Street, top flat." I suppose they object to the top flat. Servants are so particular nowadays. There! I never asked Alfred if he'd had the advertisement put in the paper. It would be just like him to have forgotten it, and when I ask him about it, to make the old excuse—too many things of more importance to remember. Seems to me if a wife wants any little matter attended to downtown, she'd better ask some one else's husband to attend to it for her. Why only this morning I found in Alfred's coat pocket the letter to Fanny Lawrence—Fanny Thompson I suppose I must call her, now she's married—I gave him to post three days ago. What must Fanny think of me? Only just returned from England, after five years' absence, married there since I saw her last, writes to me to ask when she can come and have a good old-fashioned talk with me and compare notes about the babies, and doesn't hear from me for three days! So I have to scratch a note to her asking her to come up this afternoon after three o'clock, and explaining why she hadn't heard from me before, and send it by a messenger. (*after a short pause.*) Well, how time does go around! When Fanny and I last saw each other neither of us were married, and now we're making appointments to meet and compare notes on our babies. To think, too, that Fanny should have married an Englishman; she who was the

most American girl in our set, and always took special delight in snubbing Anglomaniacs. How well I remember the way she took down that young Strong after he came back from London, with English clothes and an English accent, when he told her (*with a broad English pronunciation*), I've been to England er-er-er to finish my education, you know, because-er you can't get-er a finished education in this country, you know." "Ah I see!" exclaimed Fanny. "You went over to England a calf, and returned bœuf à la mode!" (*bell rings*) The bell! That must be a nurse, or perhaps it's some one to look at the flat. (*to maid, as she passes the hall door*) Mary!

Enter MAID.

MAID.—Yes'm.

AGNES.—Look over the baluster, Mary, and see if a woman's coming up. [*Exit* MAID, *and re-enter after moment.*

MAID.—It's a gentleman, mum, as is coming up.

AGNES.—A gentleman! Some one to see the flat, surely. How nice! Perhaps we'll succeed in letting it for the summer, after all. Show him in here, Mary.

[*Exit to side room. Exit* MAID. *After a short pause* MR. THOMPSON *is shown into the parlor by the* MAID.

MAID.—Please be seated, sir; the lady will be in directly.

[*Exit.*

THOMPSON (*who has seated himself on the sofa, speaks with a strong English accent*).—What a curious country this is, by Jove! They can't seem to call things by their right names here. "The lady will be here directly." I didn't climb up five flights of stairs to see a lady. I want to see a nurse. But men and women who in England would only be servants seem to consider themselves gentlemen and ladies here. I've only just been to a house where the girl who opened the door told me, when I said I'd come to see the nurse who advertised from there: "The lady'll be up in a moment. She's in the kitchen ironing the baby's wash." What a beastly thing it is anyhow for a man to go about looking for a nurse! I can't fancy such goings on in England. But nobody seems to think it out of the way here. Fanny just says to me: "Now, John, you'll have to go the rounds to-day. I'm sure to hear from Mrs. Daingerfield this

morning—it's three days since I wrote her—and she may appoint this afternoon. I wouldn't run the risk of not seeing her for anything. You know our nurse leaves us next week." Wants to leave us, when she's only been with us since we landed. Fanny's mother engaged her for us. Likes the place, but doesn't care to go to the sea-shore for the summer. Prefers the mountains? So do we—only we can't go there. The nurses in this country seem to have the pick of the summer resorts. Let me see (*pulling a newspaper out of his pocket*). This is the right place, is'nt it? I don't want to go wrong the way I did this morning when I mistook the number of a house, and the people looked at me as though they thought I was a suspicious character. (*Scans newspaper.*) Yes, this is right. (*Reads.*) Competent Infant's Nurse. Apply from eleven to three at 109 East Forty-ninth Street, top flat." And it's under "Situations Wanted." Well, I only hope I'll find a girl who looks as if she might do, after climbing up five flights of stairs. It's like ascending the steeple of the Cologne cathedral to get to these flats. An Englishman's house is his castle; an American's flat is his tower. Ah! here comes the nurse.

(*Enter* AGNES *through portieres. On seeing a stranger she advances somewhat hesitatingly as far as table, where she stops with an embarrassed look.*)

THOMPSON (*aside*).—A very clever, neat looking girl. I think she'll suit. A little too genteel-looking for hard work, perhaps (*to* AGNES). Well, my good girl, I think you'll suit. Have you any references? How soon will you be ready to go with me?

(AGNES *is at first surprised. But with* THOMPSON'S *last question her expression changed to alarm. She involuntarily glances at the newspaper she has been reading.*)

AGNES (*aside, excitedly and rapidly*).—Good heavens! Tall! well-dressed! with an English accent? Pennsylvania Railroad Depot! Evening train to New York! It all tallies. It's he, the madman! And I alone! What shall I do? (*calmer*) I will try to copy Mrs. Spencer. (*As if suddenly struck with an idea, and with an assumed sang-froid.*) I'll call a policeman over the messenger service, and try to keep him (*looks toward* THOMPSON) quiet till the policeman comes. (*Moves to the mantle-piece and*

signals thrice. To THOMPSON.) I'm ready to go with you any time, sir.

THOMPSON (*aside*).—She seems to be very much excited about changing places. (*To* AGNES.) Have you been long in this place, my good girl?

AGNES.—Ever since Alfred and I were married, a year and a half ago.

THOMPSON.—What, married? Did I understand you to say you were married? We don't want a coachman, so we can't engage your husband too.

AGNES.—Alfred a coachman! (*recollecting herself*). Er—no; that is, I didn't mean I was married. I meant ever since my brother Alfred was married, a year and a half ago.

THOMPSON.—Ah, I see. I don't object, anyhow, to servants having husbands if they live out in separate places. A husband is less obectionable than a lover. He doesn't come to see her so often. (AGNES *seats herself.*) Cool, but American, I suppose (*reflecting*). Fanny's very particular about the nurse's taking a bath once a week.

AGNES.—If that policeman only would come.

THOMPSON (*after some hemming and hawing*).—I must insist on your taking a bath—

AGNES (*with an alarmed start*).—Now?

THOMPSON.—Once a week at least. I suppose you're accustomed to that?

AGNES.—Only once a week? Why, every morning.

THOMPSON (*aside*).—She's cleaner than I thought she was (*to* AGNES). I see you haven't a cap on. My wife likes the nurse to wear caps. Do you object?

AGNES.—Oh, no. Alfred thinks they're very becoming to me.

THOMPSON (*aside*).—How fond she seems of that brother. I hope they're not too becoming. I don't like nurses to look too pretty. The policemen stop and talk to them (*to* AGNES). What has been your experience with babies?

AGNES (*forgetting herself, enthusiastically*).—It's been too lovely for anything. Our little Alfred's just as cunning as can be. Says papa, mamma; and as for gee-gees, he has them on the brain.

THOMPSON.—Good heavens! My good girl, I hope they're not catching?

AGNES.—Catching? What's catching?

THOMPSON.—The gee-gees. You said the baby you are taking care of had them on the brain.

AGNES (*recollecting herself*).—Oh! I see; gee-gees is baby-talk for horse.

THOMPSON (*relieved*).—Ah! You seem to love the child.

AGNES (*enthusiastically*).—Love him! My own flesh and blood! Alfred's and my dear little baby! Our first little treasure! I adore him.

THOMPSON.—Dear me! dear me! I thought you said you were not married.

AGNES (*confused*).—No; that is—er—no, sir, I'm not married.

THOMPSON.—Not married, and you have a little treasure?

AGNES.—I was just repeating what missus calls him.

THOMPSON.—Ah! I see. (*aside.*) How nervous she is. (*to* AGNES.) I hope, my good girl, you're a light sleeper; I hope you don't snore?

AGNES.—Snore! I snore! (*rises.*) Sir, you forget whom you are ad—(*recollects herself*). Oh, no, sir, I don't snore.

THOMPSON (*aside*).—Dear me, how excited she's getting! Perhaps you can't be as particular with servants in America as you can in England. Oh, I recollect now; Fanny told me I mustn't be as abrupt with the servants I saw as I would be in England. I think Fanny would like this girl. I suppose I must make a good impression. (*to* AGNES, *as he rises.*) What is your name, my dear girl?

AGNES (*frightened at* THOMPSON'S *rising*).—Agnes, sir.

THOMPSON (*advancing toward her*).—What a pretty name. (*chucks her under the chin.*)

AGNES (*aside*).—Good heavens! he's getting excited. He wants to find out the best place to pass his knife over my throat.

(THOMPSON *advances more familiarly, and tries to chuck her once more under the chin.* AGNES *seizes him, and holds his arm with the strength of desperation.* THOMPSON *in great alarm, struggles to free himself. The following is uttered at intervals of the brief struggle.*)

THOMPSON.—She's mad. I thought some of her answers wild. The woman's mad.

AGNES.—Mary! Kill the madman before he kills me. Police! police! (*A crash is being heard, as though the flat door were being forced open.* POLICEMAN *rushes in and seizes* THOMPSON. MAID *appears at hall door, and looks with amazement on the scene. To* POLICEMAN.) Hold him fast. Don't let him go. He's the madman from Philadelphia. (*Grabs the newspaper and shows it to* POLICEMAN.)

POLICEMAN.—Yes, mum. We've been on the lookout for him. Got instructions from headquarters.

(*Tightens his hold on* THOMPSON, *who seems completely dazed. Meanwhile there have been several rings at the bell, to which in the confusion no one has attended. Enter* MRS. THOMPSON.)

AGNES (*falls almost into hysterics in* MRS. THOMPSON'S *arms*). —Fanny, Fanny, you might not have found me alive. Such a terrible time with a madman!

MRS. THOMPSON.—A madman? Where is he?

AGNES (*pointing to* THOMPSON).—There!

MRS. THOMPSON.—A madman! Why, that's John. (*Runs up and embraces him as if to protect him.*) My husband.

AGNES.—Your husband? I don't understand.

THOMPSON.—I don't understand this predicament either.

MRS. THOMPSON.—Yes, my husband. There must be some mistake.

THOMPSON.—I came here to look for a nurse who advertises from here.

AGNES.—From here?

THOMPSON.—Yes, from here. (*reads.*) "Situations Wanted. Competent Infant's Nurse. Apply from 11 to 3 at 109 East Forty-ninth street, top flat."

AGNES.—Oh, that Alfred! He's gone and put it under "Situations Wanted" instead of under "Help Wanted." But you can't blame me, Fanny. See this (*shows the dispatch from Philadelphia to* MR. *and* MRS. THOMPSON).

MRS. THOMPSON.—Well, I can't blame you, Agnes. Can you, John?

MR. THOMPSON.—Why, no—tall, well-dressed, dark complexion, good-looking—it's complimentary.

POLICEMAN (*who has let go of* THOMPSON).—Well, I suppose I'm not wanted any longer. [*Exit with* MAID.

AGNES.—Mr. Thompson, how can I apologize?

MR. THOMPSON.—Don't mention it, Mrs. Daingerfield. I am most happy to have met you, even under such peculiar circumstances.

AGNES.—And I you. And now, Fanny dear, that you're here, you and Mr. Thompson must stay and dine with us, and after dinner we'll write out an advertisement for Alfred to put in the papers.

MRS. THOMPSON.—What shall it be?

AGNES.—Wanted—A competent infant's nurse for forgetful husbands.

CURTAIN.

THE WILL;

OR,

"DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS BEFORE THEY'RE HATCHED."

MISS ELLEN PICKERING.

(*See note to Dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE." Page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

JAMES CLEVERLY.	MR. DOUBTFUL.
SANDFORD.	MARY.

Enter CLEVERLY *and* DOUBTFUL.

CLEVERLEY (*with an elated air*).—Not only talked of, but absolutely settled, signed, sealed, and delivered.

DOUBTFUL.—Was it properly witnessed? I have known several legacies lost by there not being proper witnesses.

CLEVERLY.—Trust me for that; I am not going to lose a fine estate and fifteen thousand dollars a year for want of proper witnesses. Catch me asleep—when you can.

DOUBTFUL.—But suppose your uncle should change his mind, and make another will? I have known many dying men do this.

CLEVERLY.—Suppose the sky should fall we should catch larks—those that were quick enough, at least. Make another will, indeed! Why the old man was nearly at his last gasp when I came away.

DOUBTFUL.—Why did you leave him? Better have stayed: I have known many fortunes lost by the should-be-heirs going away.

CLEVERLY.—I left him at his own desire, and there is the beauty of it. My mother—clever old woman my mother, she is always helping me out of a scrape—well, my mother must needs fall sick, and long, of course, for her loving son; a sick mother's request must be complied with, so down I came. Think of the luck of getting so handsomely out of the gloom and dismals of a death-bed!

DOUBTFUL.—Suppose your mother should die?

CLEVERLY.—Oh! she is come round again, so there is no vexation about her. She is never ill at an inconvenient time—none of the Cleverlys ever are.

DOUBTFUL.—Indeed! very comfortable that—if true.

CLEVERLY.—Very comfortable! They say some people are born with silver spoons in their mouths; I verily believe I was born with a gold one set with diamonds. Only think, Doubtful! a fine estate with fifteen thousand dollars a year! Pretty considerable luck, I fancy, and skill too; it is not every one who can play his cards well.

DOUBTFUL.—The game is not played out yet. Suppose your uncle should rally, hear of your gaiety down here, fancy your mother's illness was all a sham, and make another will.

CLEVERLY.—Pooh, pooh, Doubtful! I tell you he was too ill to rally; besides, he thinks all I do is right.

DOUBTFUL.—How did you make him think that?

CLEVERLY.—By studying his tastes and opinions, and always agreeing in both. Of course, he counted me in consequence a perfect Solomon. Think as another man thinks, and he proclaims you the wisest man in the world—save himself. Trust me for knowing which side my bread is buttered, aye, and for getting the butter laid on a little thicker too. What is the worth of an opinion that is to be maintained to your own detriment? Black may be white, red, or grey, as a rich man chooses; I will maintain it to be either or anything else for such a fortune.

DOUBTFUL.—Fortune indeed! I suppose now you will be marrying your pretty cousin, Mary.

CLEVERLY.—Why as to that, you see, things are somewhat changed; I shall look higher. With my fortune, face, and figure, I may choose where I will throw my handkerchief, and the thing's done.

DOUBTFUL.—But I thought you were desperately in love with her?

CLEVERLY.—Pooh, pooh, Doubtful! the folly of a good man. I may have had a fancy—a slight *penchant* for her in former days, when we used to sit side by side in our pinafores and play blind man's buff together; but, trust me, a man with fifteen thousand dollars a year is never desperately in love with any one but himself.

DOUBTFUL.—But she is very pretty, and amiable, and—

CLEVERLY (*interrupting him*).

> "Toute cela est bonne et belle,
> Mais sans argent, à quoi sert-elle?"

DOUBTFUL.—She has twenty thousand dollars.

CLEVERLY.—When I had nothing myself, even that seemed something; but to a man with fifteen thousand a year it is a trifle—a mote in the sunbeam.

DOUBTFUL.—Having so much yourself, you need less with a wife.

CLEVERLY.—A country bumpkin idea that. The more we have, the more we want. It would be losing caste for a man of my position to marry a girl with nothing. I must choose a wife in my own sphere.

DOUBTFUL.—Poor girl! she will feel disappointed, if she ever loved you.

CLEVERLY.—If! there can be little doubt of that: but you deal in ifs—you doubt everything.

DOUBTFUL.—There are few things certain; nothing, indeed, but death and the taxes. I have seen many a to-morrow different from what was expected. Poor Mary though! If she should pine away at your desertion.

CLEVERLY.—I should be sorry for it; but it cannot be helped.

DOUBTFUL.—Who is to be the chosen one?

CLEVERLY.—Oh, there is time enough to think about that, but I have not quite decided yet.

DOUBTFUL.—But the fortune is not yours yet.

CLEVERLY.—You are like Paganini, always harping on one string; I tell you it is certain.

DOUBTFUL.—I have seen many certain things, in my time, never come to pass. But here comes poor Mary. Treat her considerately, delicately.

Enter MARY, *who greets her cousin cordially.*

MARY.—Ah! Cousin James. How do you do? I have been wishing to see you.

CLEVERLY (*stiffly, drawing himself up*).—You do me honor.

MARY (*mimicking his tone*).—Do you honor? Why, what is this, Cousin James? Here have you been ten days in this neighborhood, and yet never once been near us.

CLEVERLY (*with hauteur*).—Circumstances have changed.

MARY.—And persons, too, it seems. In former days, there was no keeping you out of our house; there you were, morning, noon, and night; as often in the way as out, yet never seeing it; playing with and teasing me as boy and man; and now you are looking as stiff as a poker with a *noli me tangere* air, as much as to say, "Keep distance due." I am more than half inclined to cut you.

CLEVERLY.—Cut me, Mary! ha, ha, ha, that is good! I shall be happy to patronize my poor relations, but we shall henceforth move in such different circles that there can be but little intercourse between us.

MARY.—Different circles, James! I do not understand

you. What makes you so good and fine all of a sudden?

CLEVERLY.—Oh! I thought you knew: my uncle has left me the whole of his fortune—all his real estate and fifteen thousand dollars a year. Of course I shall mix with the upper-ten—

MARY (*laughing*).—And cannot associate with such *canaille* as his poor relations. I understand you now, and beg to make you my best courtesy for your promise to patronize me and the rest of my family. May we presume to address you when we meet, or must you, like royalty, make the first move?

CLEVERLY.—We shall meet but rarely, as, of course, I shall move in the highest circles.

MARY.—Oh! of course; and we poor relations must not presume on our former intimacy with a landed proprietor, having such an income. With all due humility, I wish you good-morning, Mr. Cleverly, Cousin James no more. You may depend on my not shocking you by claiming acquaintance, should our paths ever cross. Let me take a last look of your grandeur. I declare you outdo the king of diamonds in your dignity.

CLEVERLY (*aside*).—What mischief in her eyes! how pretty the baggage looks. (*Aloud.*) You need not go, Mary; I would talk with you a little longer.

MARY (*with much gravity*).—Thank you, Mr. Cleverly. How condescending you are.

CLEVERLY.—I shall always be condescending to my relations, as long as they do not presume on my good nature; but it is better to have our positions clearly defined. I shall always remember you with kindness, Mary; but, of course, with fifteen thousand a year, I may command a bride with rank and wealth, and you have neither, unluckily.

MARY.—Or luckily, as the chance may be. Have you anything more to say?

CLEVERLY.—Since you insist on my being explicit then, I shall look high for a bride: in short, you can never be Mrs. Cleverly.

MARY.—And who ever dreamt of such a thing? Pray set your mind at rest on that score, Mr. Cleverly; such a fancy never entered my heart.

DOUBTFUL.—There! I told you before, I doubted her being attached to you.

CLEVERLY (*piqued*).—You doubt everything—I have no doubts on the subject, there are such things as sour grapes.

MARY.—And self-sufficient coxcombs. Suppose you propose, and put me to the proof.

CLEVERLY.—Excuse me; I seek a bride among the aristocracy. I shall have no objection to bow to you when we meet; but with fifteen thousand a year—

DOUBTFUL.—It is not yours yet.

CLEVERLY.—You are mistaken: here comes Sandford, my uncle's man of business, to announce the old man's death.

Enter SANDFORD.

CLEVERLY (*with a show of grief*).—I guess the melancholy purport of your news.

SANDFORD.—I am glad you do, since it will save me the painful duty of relating it.

CLEVERLY.—Yes; I read in your looks that my most highly respected uncle is no more. So good—so kind—so generous—a loss indeed to his afflicted survivors. He must have a handsome funeral, Sandford; one fitting his fortune, and, of course, I attend as chief mourner.

SANDFORD.—The ordering everything rests with his heiress.

CLEVERLY.—His heir, you mean; and a most wise leaving too; but he was always famous for his judgment and penetration. You need not try to deceive me: I know he has left all his fortune to his well-beloved nephew, James Cleverly.

SANDFORD.—You are mistaken: he has left the whole of his fortune to his well-beloved niece, Mary Hutton.

CLEVERLY (*aside*).—To Mary! and I have just jilted her; but it cannot be true. (*Aloud.*) Impossible, Mr. Sandford! impossible! I know his will was made in my favor.

SANDFORD.—Hearing some report that displeased him, he burned that will and made another.

CLEVERLY.—I shall dispute this last will; the old man was not in his senses.

SANDFORD.—Full proof can be brought of that: he was always famous for his judgment and penetration, you know.

DOUBTFUL.—I congratulate you, Miss Hutton.

CLEVERLY (*aside*).—I will make a bold stroke—I could cut out

my tongue for saying what I did before. (*Aloud.*) Oh, Mary! I see how it is now—I understand it all. My uncle, knowing our long attachment, thought it more courteous to leave the fortune to you, being the lady.

MARY.—You are mistaken there; my uncle had far too much penetration and judgment to fancy any such attachment. I shall be very happy to patronize you when I give parties in town, or just bow to you when we meet, and shall always be condescending to my relations, as long as they do not presume on my good nature; but it is better to have our positions clearly defined. I shall always regard you with kindness, James; but of course with fifteen thousand a year, I can never be Mrs. Cleverly.

CLEVERLY (*with a forced laugh*).—Very good, Mary, capitally done! but you know I was only in jest. You know I have long loved you.

MARY.—Talk not to me of love that fortune could warm or chill. Farewell. My regard for the playfellow is changed into contempt for the man; and the hand you now seek, because filled with gold, has long been pledged to another. Mr. Sandford, I am ready to attend you.

[*Exeunt* MARY *and* MR. SANDFORD, *leaving* CLEVERLY *confounded.*

DOUBTFUL.—Where is your fortune, and where is your little bride? I told you not to be certain; you remember the old proverb?

CLEVERLY (*angrily*).—I hate proverbs; they are vulgar, fusty, musty, old sayings. [*Flings out of the room.*

DOUBTFUL.—Ay, ay; there is nothing certain, but death and the taxes. [*Exit.*

CURTAIN.

WHO WEARS THE BREECHES?

By H. Elliott M'Bride.

CHARACTERS.

Hans Klofer, *a small Man.*
Katy Klofer, *his Wife, a large Woman.*

SCENE I.—*A shoemaker's shop.* Hans Klofer *seated on bench engaged in making boots.*

Hans.—Vell, I tinks I has done pooty vell. I has made a pooty goot deal of money, und I pelieve I vill dake de vorld a leedle easier dan vot I has peen doin' for same years pehind. Dere ain't much use in a man vorkin' and vorkin' und makin' poots and shoes all his life und not dakin' any goot of de money. I haf got a goot deal of broperty now, und I ain't got no shild to leaf it to, und vot's de use of me vorkin' on un makin' poots und shoes for beople dot von't tank me for it? eh? I shoost pelief dot I vill nefer do sich fool tings any more. I will subschripe for dwo or dree newsbapers vich has some news und some lofe shtories in dem und den I vill sit in my pig arm rockin' shair up, und read de news und dalk to de beople apout bollyticks und de vedder. Und maype I vill run for de shquire or de legislature, und I vill git to pe a pig feller shoost like some odder men dat don't know any more as I does. But apout dis ting of shuttin' up shop und qvittin' de peesness. It seems dot I can't git it done. Vell, shoost hold on dwo or dree minutes und let me dink avhile. (*Stops work.*) De only vay I will git it done vill pe shoost to sdop und nefer commence again. (*Throws down his tools.*) Dere you go, und you may lie dere; I shoost von't nefer dake you up again. Dere is von poot dot is apout dree-fourts made und de odder von is altogedder made und Sam Jones is vantin' dem pooty pad, but I shoost may as vell qvit at de middle of a poot as any odder blace. (*Gets up, kicks the boots*

aside and walks around.) Yes, I haf retired now und I am goin' to git a pig rockin' shair und a pig shmoke bipe und subschripe for dwo or dree newsbapers und I vill den dake it easy. (*Kicks the boots again.*) Git oudt of dis, you old poots. Sam Jones von't git no more poots from me. Dot's blayed oud. Sam Jones ain't goin' to make a slafe of me, or anypody else. I feel dot I am now a free man, und vy shouldn' I pe? Eh?

Enter KATY KLOFER.

KATY.—Hans, vot does dis mean? Vhy ain't you at your work? Vot you valkin' apout for? Haf you got de toofache?

HANS.—No, but I haf retired from peesness. Dot is, I haf goncluded dat I vill not vork any more.

KATY.—Hans, dot von't do now. You are cutting up some more shines. Vill I haf to gif you anodder svitching?

HANS.—No, Katy, you need'nt drouble yourself apout dot. But I haf peen tinkin' de madder ofer, and I tinks dat I am gittin' too old to do much vork. Und den ve haf no shilder, und vot's de use of vorkin' und vorkin' ven ve haf nopody but our own relationtives to leaf our money to?

KATY.—But, Hans, someting may happen to us. Ve may lose de money, or ve may git sick or you may git your leg proke or someting or annodder may go wrong, und den vot vould you do? I tinks dot it is de duty of every man to vork as long as he is aple.

HANS.—But I ish hardly able to vork. You know I ish apout feefty-dree years old und a haf, und ven a man gits dot old und has a conshideraple bile of money he ought to sdop vorking und qvit de peesnees. Und pesides all dese tings, I haf a notion of runnin' for de shquire or de legislature. Dere's Shquire Schmidt, und he don't know any more as I do, und he is makin' lots of money shoost by doin' notin' but sittin' in a pig arm shair und actin' up as a Shustice of de Beace. Now I haf hammered dis vay (*motion as if hammering*) und dis vay, und I haf sewed mit a vaxed end dis vay (*motions as if sewing*) und dis vay, und I haf vorked py daylight und py lamp light ondil I am pooty pig tired of de peesness. Und I vants to sdop. If I haf to make any more money I vant to make it py bein' de Shustice of de Beace or py runnin' afder de legislature.

KATY.—Und vhen vas you tinkin' of leafin' the peesness.

HANS.—I vas tinkin' of leafin' it shoost right avay, vidout hammerin' anodder hammer, or sewin' anodder stitch. De fact of de madder is I *haf* left de peesness now. I haf flung dem poots down und I vill nefer dake dem up again.

KATY.—Whose poots are dey?

HANS.—Dey are Sam Jones's poots.

KATY.—Und vould you sdop right now und not finish dot man's poots?

HANS.—Yes, I haf to sdop somevhere, und I shoost might as vell sdop on Sam Jones's poots or anypody else's poots.

KATY.—Han's, you are von pig fool.

HANS.—You vouldn't say dot, Katy, if I should git to be a pig Shustice of de Beace.

KATY.—Hans, pick up dem poots und go to vork.

HANS.—But I vas tinkin' apout retirin' from de peessness.

KATY.—I don't vant to stand here and dalk ferry long. I hafn't got de time. But I vant you you to go to vork pooty qvick, or I vill dake hold of you und set you town on de bench.

HANS.—But, Katy, you ton't understand de case. If I qvit vork und retire from de peesness I can buy a pig arm chair und subscribe for dwo or dhree newsbapers, und vhen de beoples sees me readin' dem, des vill say dot I am verry intelligent man, und den shoost as like as not dey vill put me in for de Shustice of de Beace. Und den afder dot I vould be pooty sure to be bersuaded by my friends to run afder de legislature.

KATY.—Hans, you are von fool. You ain't nobody und you could'nt git elected to nothin'. Do you see dem poots of Sam Jones's vich is lyin' scaddered around?

HANS.—Yes, I see dem poots. But, Katy, vhen a feller qvits peesness—

KATY (*interrupting him*).—Sdop, Hans! ton't say anodder vord. Pick up dem poots of Sam Jones's und go to vork.

HANS (*picking up the boots*).—But, you see, Katy—

KATY.—Not anodder vord, Hans; go to vork.

HANS (*aside*).—Katy is von onreasonable voman. (*Seats himself and commences to work on the boot.*)

KATY.—Sam Jones is vantin' his poots und you had petter git

dem finished up pooty qvick or, I vill gif you von pooty bad skutchin'.

HANS (*aside*).—I vish dot voman vos no vife of mine.

KATY.—Now, Hans, I vill gif you a dalkin' to. You mustn't dake no more pig fool notions indo your head dot you are a smart man und dot you can git for to pe a Shustice of de Beace, or tings of dot kind. You vant to qvit vork und den de money vould soon all pe gone to tunderation, und den ve vould haf to go to de boor house. Hans, it is a pooty goot ting you got me for a vife. If you had got any odder vomans, shust as like as not you vould haf peen as boor as Shob's durkey. You vould haf peen runnin' around tryin' to pe Shustice of de Beace, und you vould haf spent all your money, und den you vould haf peen of no account und you vould haf gone to de boor house und shoost haf peen notings at all.

HANS (*laying down his work*).—But, Katy—

KATY.—Shut up, Hans, und go on mit your vork. I am goin' to do all de dalkin' now, und Sam Jones is wantin' dem new poots.

HANS (*aside*).—I feel pooty near pad enough to go grazy. (*Commences work again.*)

KATY.—I know dwo, dree, seferal men dot took sich notions into der heads dot dey vould qvit der peesness und sit aroundt und git to pe pig fellers, und it vasn't a ferry much long shpell ondil dey vas clean proke up und knocked all to smash und tunderation. It ain't a good vay. It ain't a goot vay, nohow, for a man is pooty sure to git to drinkin' und gamplin' und shvearin' und shtealin' und blayin' gards und odder tings too numerous to tink apout. Now, Hans, I von't say noting more apout dis now; I must go out und git de dinner. But shoost you stick to your vork, und vhen you git done mit Sam Jones's poots fly at und make anodder pair. Dot's de vay to make a lifin' in dis vorld. But it ain't no good to pe runnin' around huntin' afder Shustices of de Beaces und sich odder offices vich ton't amount to noting. I'm goin' out now und I vant you to keep piggin' avay.

[*Exit* KATY.

HANS (*laying down his work*).—I vish I had nefer got married in dis whole vorld, or if I had got married I vish I hadn't got

sich a pig, bossin' voman. Now, she ton't know vot is goot for de United States, or she vouldn't pe keepin' me from retirin' from de shoe peesness und runnin' for de Shustice of de Beace. I vish she vould mind her own peesness und not come indo my shop bodderin' me und inderferin' mit my blans. I haf a pooty goot mind to git up und do someting desperate—someting dot vill make Katy pooty pad shcared. But vot vill I do? Dot's de question. Vill I commit suicide mit a bistol? No, dot von't do. If I vas killed mit a bistol I couldn't pe elected Shustice of de Beace. Und if I vas elected I vouldn't serve, under dem considerations. Vill I tear de house town und act up grazy? or vill I—— (*Steps outside.*) Cracious! dere's Katy comin' pack. (*Hastily gathers up his work.*) I vonder vhy she doesn't go ahead und git de dinner.

Enter KATY.

KATY.—I see you are vorkin' avay, Hans. Dot is righd. Eferypody should keep vorkin' und pe peezy. Dot is de vay dot people git rich, but nopody don't git rich if dey don't keep vorkin'. I shoost dropped in to see if you vas vorkin' und I see you vas doin' pooty vell, so I vill go out again. [*Exit* KATY.

HANS (*laying down his work*).—I vish dot vooman vould keeb out of my shop und mind her own peesness. I ton't vant no vooman to pe runnin in here und bossin' me around. I tinks I is capable to addend to de shoemakin' myself und I'll be pooty apt to dell her so if she ton't mind out vot she's apout. There! (*Throws one of the boots across the room.*) Go to tunder, you old poot! Do you tink I am goin' to sit here all day und do notin' but make poots und hammer at de ledder? I shoost feel now like as if I vas goin' to do someting dot vill git up a fuss und make tings lifely around dis blace. Vot vill it pe? Yes, I haf it! I haf it! I vill go und git on a pig sbree; I vill go on a pig drunk und dot vill make Katy pooty pad shcared. (*Rises and gets his hat.*) Und maype if she gits pooty pad shcared she vill not say nothing apout me retirin' from de poot und shoe peesness. I ton't care for nothing for I am goin' out on a pig drunk. I'll make Katy pooty pad shcared, und dot vill pe sholly—don't it. [*Exit* HANS.

SCENE II.—*A Room. Enter* HANS *intoxicated.*

HANS.—I expose it is pooty late und Katy has gone to ped. (*Staggers.*) Vell, dot is righd in Katy. She ton't need to sit up for me; I can find de vay. I haf had a pig sholly dime. Ve had blenty to eat und blenty to drink und ve had de piggest dime I efer heard of. I kinder like de peesness of gittin' on a drunk. I vould shoost radder git on a drunk as not now und den. (*Stumbles against a chair.*) Vot is dot? Yes, a tink dot is a chair. Vell, I expose I might sit town und rest minesel, for I feels pooty tired. Ve haf had sich a sholly pig night. Oh, awful sholly! (*Tries to sit down on a chair and falls on the floor.*) Tunder! vot's proke? I set town a goot deal und all at von dime. I s'bose dot vould make a noise und kind of shake de house a leedle. Maype it vill vake Katy up out of her sleeb und dot vould pe a bitty. (*Rises with difficulty and seats himself on the chair.*) Now, I vonder vot Katy vill say apout dis affair. I s'bose she von't altogedder like it, but den I ton't care for Katy. I feel pooty strong und I tink I could vhip Katy if I could haf a fair fight.

Enter KATY.

KATY.—You old plockhead, vere haf you been so long?

HANS.—Hush, Katy, ton't talk out so loud; you vill vaken all de sleebers dot is sleebing all around us, und dot vouldn't pe right.

KATY.—Cracious! Tunder und lightnin'! De man's peen drinkin'. Hans, vere haf you peen?

HANS.—Vell, now, Katy, you haf peen a pooty goot vife to me und I'll dell you all apout it. I vent town to de saloon und I shoost hung aroundt all day, und afore I knowed vot I vas apout I had got a leedle too much.

KATY.—You drunken old fool, I'll pay you for dot. (*She seizes him by the collar and hurls him off his chair.*)

HANS.—Murder und blixen! Dot vas a terriple clap of tunder.

KATY.—Are you goin' to make a beast of yourself?

HANS (*sitting on the floor*).—Dot is de question dot is now pehind de house. Vell, no, I tinks I vill not make dot kind of a ting out

of mineself. But I haf peen tinkin' apout makin' a Shustice of de Beace out of mineself. Vot you say apout it?

KATY.—You drunken fool, stop your talk. (*Sits down and seems to be in deep thought.*)

HANS.—Vell, I vill rise to oxblain apout dis circumstance. (*Tries to get up but falls.*) Vell, I vill oxblain mitout risin', und I guess dot vill pe shoost as vell. You see, I tinks dot I am pooty old—I am feefty-dree years old und a haf, und you are feefty-one years old und a haf, put you are sich a pig voman dot a'most anypody vould say dot you vas eighty-dree or eighty-four years old und a haf, und ve haf not got any shild of our own—und *vot's* de use of me vorkin' und vorkin' vhen ve might shoost as vell pe Shustice of de Beace as not? Now, I rise to make dis motion—no, I vill shoost make it mitout risin'. Vot's de use of risin' vhen I vill shoost git knocked ofer again? But dis is vot I vas goin' to say: ve are poth gittin' pooty old. Vot do you say apout it, Katy?

KATY.—Shut up, you drunken fool. I'm not listenin' to your gabblin'.

HANS.—Vell, den, I vill broceed mit de subject. I pelief I vill git up und sit on a shair. (*Rises and seats himself on a chair.*) Now I vill go on mit my argument, vich is in fafer of retirin' from de tiresome peesness of makin' shoes. De 'firmatif, it is to pe sboke by Hans Klofer und de negatif, it is to pe sboke by Katy Klofer. I is on de 'firmatif of de question und I vill go ahead. Vhen beople gits old—dot is vhen dey git to pe feefty-dree years old und a haf—

KATY (*springs up and speaks suddenly*).—Did you finish dem poots of Sam Jones's?

HANS.—Finish dem poots of Sam Jones's? No, I vent avay pefore tinner und Sam Jones's poots vas shcattered all ofer de shop vhen I left. But dot isn't de question vich ve are now debatin'. De question is dis—

KATY.—Shut up, you drunkard. (*She seizes him by the collar and throws him on the floor.*)

HANS (*on the floor*).—Tunder! I is town here again. I shoost might as vell haf stayed town here pefore. Vell, vhen dot question comes up for debate again dere is one ting dot I vill pe sure

apout, und dot is dis, I haf got de floor. (*Exit* KATY.) Katy isn't in a ferry goot humor. I s'bose she's gone to ped. Vell, I'm pooty glad apout dot, for vhen she's here she dumples me aroundt shoost like as if it wasn't no tifference. I tink Katy has peen considerin' de matter und she vill let me retire from de shoe peesness und git to pe a Shquire or a Shustice of de Beace. She sees dot I vill dake to drink pooty hard if I ton't git my vay apout dis matter. Of course she doesn't vant de money to git itself shquandered und dot's vot she's afraid apout, und dot's de reason she ton't vant me to quit de peesness. But she needn't git shcared apout dot, for I'll shoost be as stingy as anypody.

Enter KATY, *carrying a pair of boots.*

KATY.—Dere, Hans, go to vork und git at it mighty qvick. I von't haf no foolin'. Dem poots must pe finished pefore daylight in de mornin'. (*Throws down the boots.*)

HANS.—Tunder und peesvax! You ton't say dot!

KATY.—Yes, I do, und I mean it. Go to vork.

HANS.—But it is pooty lade. I s'bose it's twelf o'clock at night.

KATY.—Vell, it ton't make no tifference if it vas feefteen o'glock. You haf got to finish dem poots.

HANS.—But, Katy, ton't you know I is shoost comin' off a pig drunk?

KATY.—Yes, I know all apout dot und I ton't vant any dalk on de subject. If you stay at de tafern half of de night you vill haf to vork de odder half.

HANS (*rising and seating himself on a chair*).—Oh, dear! dis is pooty distressin'. (*Aside.*) My vife is von regular old toyfel.

KATY (*commandingly*).—Take hold of de poots.

HANS.—Yes, I vill take hold (*picks up the boots*), und I vill do my pest, put dey vill pe von shpoiled lot of poots; for, you see, I is too drunk to make poots right.

KATY.—You'll haf to finish dem anyhow.

HANS.—But my reputation as a poot maker vill pe knocked to smash if I make poots vhen I is tight. Und dot vould pe awful if I ton't retire from de peesness.

KATY.—You'll haf to finish dem poots for I'm goin' to stand

ofer you mit a strap in my hand. (*Produces strap.*) Now go to vork right avay instantly.

HANS.—Goot cracious! how can I go to vork mitout de tools?

KATY.—Go to de shop und git de tools und be pooty qvick apout it.

HANS.—Yes, I vill. (*Aside.*) My vife is vorser dan de toyfel afore daylight. [*Exit* HANS.

KATY.—Hans is gifin' me a goot deal of drouples, und I vill haf to pe pooty severe mit him. He has gone off to de daferns und got drunk. Dot is awful pad. I von't haf no drunken huspand apout dis house—no, I vill not. Now, shoost as like as not he vill git shleeby und he vill vant to go shleeb vhen he is vorkin' at dem poots, but he shan't shleep—no, not a vink of de eye ondil dem poots of Sam Jones's is finished up—dreed and all. I'll show Hans Klofer apout dakin' a pet und goin' off to de davern und gittin' drunk und stayin' half de night. Dot kind of vork can't pe vorked aroundt apout here. I am shoost goin' to set my foot town righd straight upon it.

Enter HANS *carrying shoemaker's bench and some tools.*

HANS.—Vell, I haf come pack.

KATY.—Sit town den und go to vork.

HANS (*setting down his bench and seating himself upon it*).—I vill git to de peesness righd avay, but I am shcared apout de kind of a job it vill pe. I is apout half drunk und apout half ashleeb und dem poots of Sam Jones's vill be one shpoiled job.

KATY.—I'll attend to dot. I'll pe a zort of a Shustice of de Beace for dis ogcasion, und I'll see dot de vork is done right. (*Raises the strap over him.*)

HANS.—Yes, I is goin' to vork, und I tinks I can do de vork pooty vell under de circumstances. (*Commences to work.*) But, Katy, vould you pe so kind as to allow me to sing a song or two vhile I is vorkin' shoost to keeb me from goin' to shleeb?

KATY.—Sing so much as you vant to, but do your vork vell. Sam Jones has alvays peen a good gustomer—he alvays pays up righd on de spot, und de poots must pe made shoost exactly righd.

HANS (*working rapidly*).—Yes, dot's de correct brinciple for a man vich is in de shoe peesness. If de gustomer pays up righd

on de spot, den make him a goot boot, but if he does'nt pay up for a long shbell, or if he doesn't pay at all, or if he nefer pays, den make dot man a pad poot—one dot vill rip und tear all to tunder. Dot's been my brinciple, und I haf got along well in de shoe peesness. I haf laid up a goot deal of money und I am gittin' pooty old. I is feefty-dree years old und a half, und I could afford to retire from peesness.

KATY.—You vork at de poots petterish vhen you is platherin', so you may plather avay. But dere's von or dwo pegs not qvite righd.

HANS.—Yes, but I'll fix dot up. I has peen in de shoemakin' peesness for a long shbell—dirty-dree or dirty-four years, und I ought to know someting apout dis dime apout drifin' a peg.

KATY.—Don't gif me any of your impudence—I von't dake it from a drunk man.

HANS.—I didn't vant to be impudent to you, Katy, for you is a remarkaple nice voman und I tink a great deal of you. But I vas shoost remarkin' dot I had peen in de shoemakin' peesness for—

KATY.—Vell, go on mit your vork und don't dalk so much.

HANS.—Yes, dot is vot I is apout. I is vorkin' mighty fast, for I vants to git done. I don't vant to pe vorkin' all day und all night too.

KATY.—If you had vorked all day instead of goin' off und gittin' drunk you vouldn't haf had to vork now.

HANS.—Yes, I s'bose dot is so. Vell, I vill sing avhile for I haf shoost dalked apout all de dalkin' I haf got. Let me see—vot vill I sing? Yes, I vill gif you someting dot is a leedle batriotic. (*Sings "Star Spangled Banner."*)

"Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight s last gleaming,

(*Sings drowsily*)—

"Whose broad stripes and bright stars through—

(*Lets his tools fall on the floor.*)

KATY.—Hans, vake up und go to vork. I can't allow no shleebin' now. Sam Jones must haf dem poots against daylight.

HANS (*recovering from his drowsiness and gathering up his*

work).—Hello! vas I goin' to shleeb? Vell, I did'nt know dot I vas so shleeby. Dot is von shleeby song anyhow. I vill sing someting lifely. (*Sings.*)

"So led de vide vorld vag as it vill,
I'll pe gay und habby still,
Gay und habby,
Gay und habby,
I'll pe gay und habby still."

Now, Katy, I'll sing you a leedle biece of anodder song. (*Sings.*)

"My vife und I lif all alone
In a leedle log hut ve call our own,
She lofes gin und I lofe rum,
I dell you now we'fe lots of fun.
Ha, ha, ha! you und me,
Leedle prown jug, don't I lofe dee?
Ha, ha, ha! you und me,
Leedle prown jug, don't I lofe dee?"

I vich I could git von pig drink shoost now—righd out of dot leedle prown jug. I is mighty dry. (*Sings.*)

"Ha, ha, ha! you und me,
Leedle prown jug, don't I lofe dee?
Ha, ha, ha! you und me,
Leedle prown jug, don't I lofe dee?"

(*Throws down tools and boots.*) Dere! dem poots of Sam Jones's is done at last. Und I am pooty shleeby.

KATY.—Und you may go to ped if you bromise dot you vill nefer drink any more peer, rum, chin, vhisky, prandy or anyting dot vill make you git drunk und make a pig fool of yourself.

HANS.—Vell, I von't nefer drink noting—I vill qvit und nefer dake a drop if you vill shoost let me retire from de shoemakin' peesness und run for de Shustice of de Beace.

KATY.—You are von pig dunce to speak of sich a thing. I von't agree to dot. You are von shtrong man und I am von shtrong voman, und ve can poth vork for a goot many years. I von't allow you to stop vork, nohow.

HANS.—But den de vorld might be losin' von goot Shustice of de Beaces if I should keep on vorkin'.

KATY.—Vell, de vorld may lose six t'ousand Shustices of de Beace for all dot I care. I tinks ve haf got too many of dem.

Dey ain't of no account but to keep up the tafern peesness und to keep beople fighdin'.

HANS.—Den you von't hear to de broposition dot I retire from de shoemakin' und de bootmakin' peesness?

KATY (*shaking her strap*).—No, I vill not. Und I vill vhack vou, und I vill vhip you und I vill drounce you if you efer go und git drunk again. Do you bromise dot you vill nefer drink any more peer, rum, shin, vhisky, prandy, or anyting dot vill make you git drunk?

HANS.—Katy. I don't tink I ought to bromise, for I might need a leedle peer somedimes for de goot of my health.

KATY (*raising her strap*).—Bromise pooty qvick, or I vill drounce you.

HANS.—Yes, I bromise.

KATY.—Dot is righd. Now you may go to ped.

HANS.—Den you von't allow me to retire from de shoemakin' peesness?

KATY.—No.

HANS.—Den you von't let me run for de Shustice of de Beace?

KATY.—No.

HANS (*speaking to the audience*).—Den dere is von remark dot I vant to make.

KATY.—Vot is dot?

HANS (*to audience*).—My vife, vich her name is Katy, she vears de pritches und I am de voman.

CURTAIN.

A COLD IN THE HEAD.

By Mrs. Russell Kavanaugh.

CHARACTERS.

Isabel Tracy, *a fashionable belle.*
Julia Kesgrove, *a friend to* Isabel.
Mrs. Graham, *sister-in-law to* Alex. Graham.
Alex. Graham, *a rich bachelor, recently returned from Europe.*
Leonard Appleton, *a friend to* Graham.
Betty, *maid of all work.*

SCENE I.—*A room in* Mrs. Graham's *house, arranged as a boudoir. On one side, near back of stage, a table with books and writing materials. On the opposite side of stage a large arm-chair, upon which is seen an old gentleman's dressing-gown, skull-cap, etc.* Mrs. Graham *discovered reading a letter. She walks to and fro impatiently.*

Mrs. Graham (*pauses*).—It is impossible for me to settle myself to regular employment when I am expecting Alex. Graham every moment. (*Reads.*) Yes; he says he will sail on the 15th. In that case he ought to be here to-day. (*Noise outside; she assumes a listening attitude; trips across to the opposite entrance; steps approach.*) Some one is coming up the stairs. (*Looks out and listens.*) It is certainly a man's step. (*Claps her hands.*) Yes, yes; it is Alex.

Enter Alex. Graham.

Mrs. Graham (*runs toward him, seizes his arm, leads him to front of stage, looking smilingly into his face*).—And it is indeed really your dear old self! How *do* you do? I am so glad you are back safe! I was so afraid of that abominable ocean at this season. Such awful winds! (*Shudders.*) But dear me! how muffled up you are! (*Scrutinizes* Alex.)

Alex.—Well, you bay say "buffled up" ad "awful wids," I

dever had such a cold id all by life. (*Affects the symptoms of a cold in the head.*) I've sneezed byself to death. Every bode id by body aches.

MRS. GRAHAM (*aside*).—How unfortunate, and Miss Tracy's ball so near! (*To* ALEX.) Pshaw! It is nothing! Every body has a cold now. I guess it is occasioned by the weather and fall rains. There is no danger, unless it affects your lungs. A cold in the head is nothing.

ALEX.—But it's so confounded disagreeable.

MRS. GRAHAM.—I know; but it's so easily cured. You'll soon get over it. A cold in the head is nothing serious.

ALEX. (*ironically*).—Oh, do! A cold id the head is dothing! It's dothing to have a red dose (*sneezes*), a buzzig in your ears, paids all over your body like so bany needles ad scissors sticking you! Oh, do; it's dothing. A bad had as well be dead. (*Sneezes.*)

MRS. GRAHAM (*laughs aside*).—I can't help laughing. (*To* ALEX.) Your voice does sound funny. (ALEX. *seats himself disconsolately.*) But don't look so doleful, dear Alex. You are worth all the dead men yet. Never mind; I will nurse you up. I'll get a mustard plaster, and make some Irish-moss tea, and have a rousing hot stew. You'll be straight in time for Isabel Tracy's ball. (*Aside.*) I wouldn't have her to see him now for a million! (*To* ALEX.) Let me see. In the first place I'll drop her a note, saying you won't be here for a week; that is, I'll write as soon as I get you under treatment. She will put off the ball, I am sure. (*Goes up to* ALEX. *unclasps the fur collar, takes off his hat, puts them aside, draws the arm-chair to extreme corner of stage, gathers up the gown and cap, and approaches* ALEX.) Now, my dear old boy, you must not be obstinate. Do as I say, and you will soon be relieved.

ALEX. (*dolefully*).—Ibe willing to do anything id reason.

MRS. GRAHAM.—Very well then; take off that heavy overcoat. (ALEX. *obeys.*) Now your neck-tie—there. (*Holds sleeve of gown open.*)

ALEX.—What dext?

MRS. GRAHAM (*laughs*).—You old simpleton! Why, put your hand in the sleeve. (ALEX. *puts on gown.*) It is ever so much

too big, but all you want is comfort. Here is papa's nice warm skull-cap (*puts it on* ALEX.'s *head*) to keep your ears from the draught. You'll be so cosy in this great chair here by the fire. (*Pushes* ALEX. *into chair; he leans back, shuts his eyes, and sneezes.*)

ALEX.—O dear! O dear! (MRS. GRAHAM *runs off the stage; returns immediately, followed by* BETTY *with foot-tub.*)

MRS. GRAHAM.—Put the tub at Mr. Graham's feet. Dr. Blue-pill says keep the extremities warm. Depend upon it, you'll *soon* be well, and can dance at the ball.

ALEX.—Did you tell Biss Tracy that I ab rich?

MRS. GRAHAM (*deprecatingly*).—No indeed; she thinks you are as poor as anybody. Oh, she is a charming girl. (*To* BETTY.) You can go; when Mr. Graham rings you can come and take away the tub.

BETTY.—Yes, ma'am. [*Exit* BETTY.

ALEX.—How lo'g will you be gone?

MRS. GRAHAM.—Oh, not long. But you be sure to keep your feet in the water. (ALEX. *makes grimace as he puts his feet in the tub;* MRS. GRAHAM *touches water in tub with her fingers.*) Pshaw! that water is not too hot? You men can't stand anything. (*Puts on hat and gloves.*) Now, old boy, think of Miss Tracy and be quiet, and you may snatch a nap. I'll *soon* be back and bring ever so many nice things—mustard plasters and all.

ALEX.—I abominate bustard plasters and detest teas.

MRS. GRAHAM (*arranges cap on* ALEX.'s *head*).—That is nonsense. Keep quiet, that's an old darling, and you shall have some chicken-broth and toast for a lunch.

[*Exit* MRS. GRAHAM.

ALEX. (*looks after* MRS. GRAHAM).—There goes the best-hearted wobad in the world. (*Groans, and looks round into the mirror.*) I suppose this is the way I'll look when I am old.

Enter MRS. GRAHAM.

MRS. GRAHAM.—I turned back to ask if I must go by and tell Leonard Appleton that you are here? He doesn't know of your arrival. He thinks so much of you.

ALEX.—Ob, yes, by all beans; tell him to cobe.

MRS. GRAHAM (*kisses her hand*).—I will. Good-bye.

[*Exit* MRS. GRAHAM.

ALEX.—Dear old Led. If he knew I had the small-box he'd cobe. (*Looks toward mirror.*) He will hardly know be; for I would doubt by owd identity if it were dot for this ring od my little findger. (*Twirls ring, makes a wry face, draws his feet up.*) W-h-e-w! how hot this water *is!* (*Sneezes.*) Ab I to be boiled alive like a lobster? Ball, indeed! I look like dadcing! (*Looks in glass, and pushes back cap from his eyes.*) Codfound this cap. Helend's father's head is as big as the giant Jack killed. I wish I could see that Tracy girl. Well, she doesn't think I ab rich, and that's codsoling. If I wed her it will be on by owd merits. Heigho! how long ab I to be in this fix? (*Knock outside.*) That is Betty, the baid, after the tub, I suppose. Cobe id.

Enter LEONARD APPLETON.

LEONARD (*runs up to* ALEX. *and shakes him by the hand*).—By the piper! it is indeed my old friend. Glad to see you. But (*starts back, and laughs*) you look like a mummy. What the dickens ails you?

ALEX.—A cold id the head. But, as Helen says, it's dothing; well sood wear off. I ab so glad you thought enough of me to cobe.

LEONARD.—Mrs. Graham said you were not very well, but I did not expect to find you so completely metamorphosed. Why, man, you look like an old fossil. You must rally, and come out of this in time for Miss Tracy's ball. By the way, your pretty sister-in-law is anxious for you to make a favorable impression upon this belle of the season. Have you ever seen her?

ALEX.—I have dot. But it seebs to me I heard that you had pretedsions in that direction. I don't want to sta'd id your way.

LEONARD (*aside*).—No such "girl of the period" for me. (*To* ALEX.) I confess that for awhile I was dazzled; but, my old chum, if ever I marry, I want a wife with a heart.

ALEX.—A heart! I don't understa'd. But before we edter idto details please step id the other roob (*pointing to entrance*),

and look abong by baggage; you'll see a box of old Havadas. I bought them id Paris. Bring it; and while we edjoy a good sboke we cad talk it all over.

LEONARD (*starts toward entrance*).—A-l-l right.

ALEX.—Oh, dot *there;* this way (*points to opposite side*) · there, just id the dext roob.

LEONARD.—I see! I see! I will be back directly; and then, old boy, see if I don't open your eyes. [*Exit* LEONARD.

ALEX.—What the dation does he bead? (*Knock heard outside.*) That girl after the tub, do doubt. Cobe id.

Enter MISS TRACY *and* JULIA KESGROVE.

ALEX. (*draws cap over his eyes, and turns to audience, aside*).—Here's a pretty snap for a young mad to be id. (*Looks furtively round.*) Walk id.

JULIA (*exchanges glances with* ISABEL. *To* ALEX.).—Is Mrs. Graham at home?

ALEX. (*impatiently*).—Do, Biss. (*Pulls gown closer about him.*)

MISS TRACY.—How very provoking! What shall we do!

JULIA.—Oh, we can just drop a note; there is writiug material on the table. (MISS TRACY *points to* ALEX. *warningly.*) Pshaw! You needn't mind the old gentlemen. He is Mrs. Graham's father. I know him; and, though he is a clever old man, he is deaf as a post, and almost blind in the bargain. He'll not notice us.

MISS TRACY.—What a horrid old creature! Such people haven't any business to live.

JULIA.—Why, Isabel Tracy! How can you talk so?

ALEX. (*aside; starts with surprise, and pulls cap down*).—Egad! and this is Biss Tracy! No busidess to live, hey! (*Groans.*)

JULIA (*advances a step; speaks in a very loud tone*).—I want to write a note to Mrs. Graham, if you please.

ALEX. (*nods, and waves his hand in direction of table; gruffly*).—Aye! aye! (*Aside.*) I'll keep up the bistake. (*Groans.*)

MISS TRACY.—What an odious old bear! Did you notice the splendid seal-ring on his finger? It makes me nervous to look at

the old thing. (*They advance to the table, facing the audience; Julia sits, and draws paper and pen toward her.*)

JULIA.—Well, Miss Tracy, what shall I say?

MISS TRACY.—Oh, anything you like. Tell her we've been here, and are sorry she was away. (*Yawns.*) I wonder if the rich Alex. her brother-in-law, has come from abroad.

JULIA (*writes*).—I suppose so; at least I know Mrs. Graham looks for him to-day.

MISS TRACY (*approaches mirror*).—Good heavens! suppose he should come and find us here. (*Arranges her hat, scarf, dress, etc.*) Mercy! I'm *so* sorry I didn't wear my beaded redingote. (*Looks closer in glass.*) And the crimps are nearly all out of my hair. Jule! (*Turns and views herself from side to side.*) Do you think it is true that Alex. Graham is rich; I mean sure enough *rich?*

JULIA.—Didn't Tom Jeffreys say he is worth half a million? But, my goodness! how can I write with you wriggling about in that style?

MISS TRACY (*shrugs her shoulders*).—Things like this are always so exaggerated. Do you think, Jule, that it is worth my while to captivate this Alex. Graham? I can't afford to throw myself away on a small fortune or be taken in by a humbug.

JULIA (*laughs*).—Are you not ashamed to be so mercenary? You horrid girl! Pray, if you conclude to marry Mr. Alex. Graham's money, what will you do about Leonard Appleton? I call it shabby treatment to throw him overboard after encouraging his attentions and making him spend twelve and fifteen dollars a night taking you to the opera and such places.

MISS TRACY.—I couldn't think of wedding a poor lawyer and second-rate author whose manuscripts are returned "Respectfully declined." I thought, Jule, you knew me better.

(*While this conversation is going on,* ALEX. *must mutter aside, and express surprise and disgust by various gestures.*)

JULIA.—Leonard Appleton has a heart, if he has no fortune.

MISS TRACY.—I can't help that; you know we society girls must look to the main chance.

(LEONARD *appears at entrance in sight of the audience; but, unseen by* MISS TRACY *and* JULIA, *expresses surprise in pantomime.*)

JULIA.—Don't talk so loud. (*Looks toward* ALEX.)

MISS TRACY.—Humph! Old Crumpy is deaf as a post, so you say. (*Looks toward* ALEX.) He must be asleep. See how he's curled up in that big chair. Ugh! it makes me shiver to look at him.

JULIA.—I've heard that walls have ears.

ALEX. (*aside*).—Yes, add so have I.

MISS TRACY (*puts her hand in her pocket, withdraws it, and shakes out her handkerchief*).—My stars!

JULIA—I never can finish this note, you keep up such a chattering and moving about. What are you fumbling in your pocket for?

MISS TRACY (*alarmed*).—I do believe I left that bottle of rouge on the counter at Brown's drug-store; and what *am* I to do for a complexion at the matinée this afternoon?

JULIA.—We can call for it as we go home.

MISS TRACY (*contemptuously*).—That *would* be nice—to ask if Miss Tracy had left a bottle of *rouge* on the counter! No; I can pinch my cheeks as I enter the theater; and if any of the fellows are standing round, they'll think it is the exercise of walking. Lawd! how men can be fooled!

ALEX. (*aside*)—And so cad wobed sobetibes.

MISS TRACY.—If you've finished the note, we will go. I forgot to bring my cigarette case, and am dying for a smoke.

ALEX. (*starts, aside*).—Adother leaf udfolded—she smokes!

(LEONARD *outside, in view of audience, unseen by* MISS TRACY *and* JULIA *makes signs to* ALEX.)

ALEX. (*aside*).—This is rich. But I bust be discreet. Bub's the word. (*Groans and shuffles in the chair.*)

JULIA (*to* MISS TRACY).—Wait one minute till I explain to Old Crumpy, as you call him. (*Approaches* ALEX.) Please tell Mrs. Graham (*pitches her voice to its highest key*) that we—

MISS TRACY (*runs to* JULIA *and catches her dress-skirt*). D-o-n-'t, for mercy's sake, stand bawling at that old bag of bones. Minette is waiting to try on my ball-dress.

JULIA.—All right. Mrs. Graham will understand when she sees the note. [*Exeunt, with mock respect to* ALEX.

Enter LEONARD.

LEONARD (*runs up to* ALEX. *and drags him up*).—Give us your hand, old boy.

ALEX. (*looks close in* LEON.'S *face*).—You heard it all! (*Claps his hands gleefully.*) I saw you, but did dot dare bake a botion. (*Catches* LEONARD, *whirls him round the room, stumbles against a package on the floor, picks up bottle of rouge and holds it up.*) O you beautiful thing! (*Kisses bottle.*)

LEONARD.—Shake hands again, old fellow. But did n't we catch the artful minx?

ALEX.—Did n't we though? Forever, frob dow till dever, will I say blessings od a bad cold. (*They clasp each other and whirl round the stage.*)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*A tastefully arranged reception-room.* ISABEL TRACY *standing before a mirror, dressed in full party costume.* MINETTE (*French maid*) *in attendance.*

MISS TRACY (*looks over her shoulder to see the effect of her toilet; walks forward*).—O Minnette! you are a treasure! My dress is a perfect fit! (*Stops as* MINETTE *arranges her sash, etc.*) Is my complexion all right? (MINETTE *runs to table, takes puff-box, and approaches* MISS TRACY.)

MINETTE.—Pardon! s'il vous plait; only von leetle touch is necessaire. (*Touches* MISS TRACY'S *face lightly.*) Dere; it is parfeect; one grand feenish. Ma'mselle vil be ze belle of ze ball. Suparb! beauteeful! (*Stands back and looks admirably at* MISS TRACY.)

MISS TRACY (*taps* MINETTE *with her fan*).—There; thatwill do. Now hide all the cosmetics. (MINETTE *obeys.*) Go down, and the instant Mrs. Graham's party arrive invite them to this room.

MINETTE.—Oui, ma'mselle. (*Courtesies.*) [*Exit* MINETTE.

MISS TRACY (*looks in the glass, and comes forward*).—Yes, Minnette is right; I am beautiful; and if Mr. Alex. Graham resists me this evening, his heart is harder than the nether millstone. A pretty woman always feels her power.

Enter JULIA.

JULIA (*runs up to* MISS TRACY *and embraces her*).—O you

lovely creature! Your dress is splendid. Why, Minette is a jewel. Oh, you are too sweet! (*Kisses* MISS TRACY.)

MISS TRACY.—Sweet enough, do you think, to captivate the rich Mr. Graham?

JULIA.—He can not resist you, Isabel, any more than he can live without breathing. But tell me (*draws closer*), what will you do with poor Appleton?

MISS TRACY (*puts her arm round* JULIA'S *waist*).—I am glad you mentioned the subject. But I must talk fast, for the Grahams will be here before long. I told Minette to meet them and bring them to this room—

JULIA (*grasps* MISS TRACY'S *arm*).—Not Mr. Graham! You surely would not invite him into your boudoir.

MISS TRACY.—Why not, Miss Prude? He knows that his sister-in-law and I are intimate, and there is nothing like *first* impressions. It will make him feel at home, right in the beginning. I am entitled to privileges, as it is my ball. Oh, but I intend to make him think I am the most artless creature. I'll make him believe that it was all a mistake about Minette asking him into this room, and smooth it over with the sweetest attention. Law, Julia, you do not know what fools men are!

JULIA.—But you'll never succeed in making a fool of Appleton. Your flirtation with him has been too serious, and he's not a man to be trifled with.

MISS TRACY.—To tell the truth, I am afraid he will give me trouble when he finds I am going to marry Alex. Graham. Now (*draws near* JULIA) this is what I wish you to do. Appleton is a very good catch; indeed I'd marry him if I had not determined to secure a richer husband—

JULIA.—But—

MISS TRACY.—Don't interrupt me. As I said, Appleton is worth angling for. He admires you, and if you play your cards right, you can win him.

JULIA (*starts back, clasps her hands, and rolls up her eyes*).—Why, Isabel Tracy, are you going crazy?

MISS TRACY.—No; I mean what I say. This very night, after we go down to the ball-room, you can make Appleton ask you to marry him, if you will. Why, gracious! girl (*stamps her foot*);

you have only to pretend that you are unhappy. Appleton is so good-hearted he never could stand to see a woman in trouble. Let him think you are pining. Betray in some interesting manner that *he* is the object, the one who has stolen your heart. Oh, there are a thousand ways to induce a fellow to propose, if I can only make you take the right view of it. Then, you see, as soon as he pops the question, all you have to do is to give me a hint, and then I'll go into hysterics, and be indignant, and tell him that "hell has no fury like a woman scorned" (*gesticulating theatrically*), and all that sort of thing. Don't you *see* how easy it is? Do this for me (*coaxing* JULIA), and as soon as I am married to Graham I will present you with a splendid bridal outfit, as *then* I will have command of any amount of money.

JULIA.—I am afraid it is not so easy as you say it is—

MISS TRACY (*interrupts* JULIA).—You don't know until you begin. Only say you will *try*. (*Coaxes* JULIA.) That's a darling. Promise. (*Voices outside.*) Dear! dear! They are coming. (*Puts her hand over* JULIA'S *lips as she is about to speak.*) S-h-u-s-h! Mum is the word. Remember, I'll depend on you to take Appleton off of—

Enter MRS. GRAHAM *and* ALEX. MISS TRACY *approaches* MRS. GRAHAM, *attempts to grasp her hand and embrace her.* MRS. GRAHAM *draws back.*

MRS. GRAHAM (*sternly*).—Miss Tracy; a-h-e-m.

MISS TRACY (*aside*).—What does this sudden coolness mean? It was always "dear Isabel" before. I'll see.

MRS. GRAHAM.—In the *first* place, I wish to apologize for my brother, who failed to send a reply to your polite invitation to your ball this evening. True etiquette demanded that he should call in person, but ever since his return he has been quite ill with a bad cold, and therefore—

MISS TRACY (*graciously interrupts* MRS. GRAHAM; *she advances, and holds out her hand to* ALEX).—No apology necessary, I assure you. Allow me, Mr. Graham, to welcome you back to home and all you love.

ALEX. (*aside*).—It is well I found her out. She is confoundedly pretty. (*To* MISS TRACY; *bows, and takes her hand.*) Thank you, Miss Tracy.

MISS TRACY (*to* MRS. GRAHAM).—How charming you look! I am happy to number you and your brother among my guests. But where is your husband? He surely did not permit you to come without him.

MRS. GRAHAM (*stiffly*).—I did not come with the intention to participate in the evening's entertainment, as you may infer by my dress. I expect to keep my brother company.

MISS TRACY (*aside*).—What does it all mean? (*To* MRS. GRAHAM.) I do not understand—

ALEX. (*advances*).—I came home yesterday, Miss Tracy, with a bad cold, and have been a martyr to steam and stews until this morning. As fate would have it, I chanced to be playing the part of *Old Crumpy* when you and that lady (*points to* JULIA) entered my sister's room, and was compelled to hear your conversation.

JULIA (*aside, clasps her hands*).—Good heavens! What will Isabel do?

ALEX. (*produces bottle of rouge*).—And as you chanced to drop this package upon the floor, I was fortunate enough to find it; for, if you will remember, I was bundled up in my uncle's arm-chair.

MISS TRACY (*aside*).—So *this* is what's the matter! Well, they sha'n't scare me. (*To* ALEX.) I am sorry you troubled yourself. The package was of no consequence whatever. (*Draws herself up defiantly.*)

MRS. GRAHAM (*comes forward*).—You seem to have changed your mind, Miss Tracy; but if it is of no consequence to you, it has been of immense consequence to Alex., as it has enabled him to appreciate your charms (*sneers*) at their real value.

MISS TRACY (*aside*).—I have Appleton left, thank goodness! (*To* ALEX.) Your vanity, sir, is only equalled by your impudence. One to hear you and your delectable sister talk would suppose that I, Miss Tracy, have some designs upon you for the purpose of entrapping you into matrimony. I refer you (*with lofty disdain*) to Mr. Leonard Appleton, as he is the gentleman who has a prior claim to my hand and heart; and no doubt when he knows of this premeditated insult he will call you to account.

MRS. GRAHAM.—Mr. Appleton might at one time have had a

claim to your *hand;* he certainly never had one to your *heart,* as you made him understand distinctly; for, incredible as it may appear, *he* was also an unwilling listener to the conversation yesterday between you and your friend; as my brother had, a moment before you came in, sent him to the adjoining room to bring a box of cigars, and he could not help hearing all you said.

JULIA (*aside*).—Then her cake is dough indeed!

MINETTE.—Mon Dieu! (MISS TRACY *bows her head, and covers her face with her lace handkerchief.*)

MRS. GRAHAM.—I am glad to see you still have some feeling. This has been a bitter lesson; but it may prove a salutary one, and teach not only you, but every girl who is a flirt, the truth of the old adage, "Between two stools one is sure to come to the ground."

CURTAIN.

THE WEDDING DAY,

OR,

"BETTER LATE THAN NEVER."

BY ELLEN PICKERING.

(*See note to dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE," page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

MR. PLACID.	MR. PEPPER.
MR. WORTHY.	MRS. RUFFLE.

SCENE.—MR. PLACID *seated, quietly reading a book.* MR. PEPPER *pacing the room impatiently.*

PEPPER (*stopping suddenly, looks angrily at* PLACID, *then talks to himself in a loud aside.*)—Was there ever such a stone? a stockfish? Has not moved hand or foot, or raised his eyes from his book for the last half-hour; and some call him a quiet man,

in praise. I hate your quiet men. An oaf, a dolt, an idiot! I have been in a fever from the moment Ruffle died, and left us joint guardians to his children. There now, there is the clock chiming the half-hour, and the wedding was to have taken place precisely at nine, and the party assembled a quarter before. I told Placid just now that it was half an hour after the time, but he paid no heed to my words. As well talk to the deaf old house dog in the yard: better, for he might wag his tail to make believe he heard and understood. I wonder if I hallooed Fire in his ear if he would sit on reading there like an automaton. I have a great mind to try. I hate your quiet men: they always put me in a passion. Ha! who comes with such a hurried step?

Enter MRS. RUFFLE *in great agitation.*

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh, Mr. Pepper! Oh, Mr. Placid!

PEPPER.—My dear Mrs. Ruffle, what is the matter?

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh, shocking! dreadful! it will be the death of me. I am sure I shall never survive the shame—the disgrace. And poor dear Jemima. (*Fans herself furiously with her handkerchief.*)

PEPPER.—My dear madam, what is the matter? Has my ward, Miss Ruffle, eloped?

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh, dear! worse, worse!

PEPPER.—Worse, my dear Mrs. Ruffle? worse? Is the breakfast all spoilt?

MRS. RUFFLE (*pettishly*).—La, Mr. Pepper. how can you be thinking of eating when such an insult has been offered to my poor dear sensitive child? It is enough to make poor dear, dead Mr. Ruffle come out of his grave to see how calmly you bear this wrong to his innocent, eldest daughter. He would never have appointed you guardian to his children, if he could have thought you would act in this way. I have a great mind to fight him myself, poor, feeble woman as I am—there are no men nowadays! poor dear Mr. Ruffle was the last of them. My daughter! oh, my daughter! But you have no pity for a mother's feelings, thinking about breakfast, indeed. (*She holds her handkerchief to her eyes.*)

PEPPER.—My dear Mrs. Ruffle, what is the matter? Only tell

me who has wronged you, and then see what I won't do. Peter Pepper was never yet accused of want of spirit.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh, Jemima! poor dear Jemima!

PEPPER.—What of my ward? I am dying with impatience. Has she fainted, or torn her lace veil? She has not eloped, you say.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Eloped, indeed! I wish she had; it would have served him right; but there is no one to elope with, and she would not hear of such a thing. Could you believe it? Instead of being here at half-past eight as he promised last night, Mr. Worthy is not come yet; and it is more than half-past nine.

PEPPER.—Worthy not come! shameful, disgraceful! I wish I had my pistols here, he should not escape.

MRS. RUFFLE (*soothed*).—I was sure you would feel for me, Mr. Pepper. There is everybody wondering and asking where the bridegroom is, and then whispering together. And there are the bridesmaids all pouting, and Jemima, poor dear Jemima!—it is well I would not let her wait in the damp, cold church. As it is only a minute's walk, no need she should go till Mr. Worthy comes.

PEPPER.—No, indeed! shameful, disgraceful, of Worthy.

MRS. RUFFLE.—So it is, Mr. Pepper. The guests will be coming to breakfast presently, and then the tale will fly all over the country.

PEPPER.—What have you done, my dear Mrs. Ruffle? Have you sent any one to look after him?

MRS. RUFFLE.—The groom rode up to the top of the hill, but could not see anything of him.

PEPPER.—You should have kept him last night, when you had him.

MRS. RUFFLE.—He *would* go back last night because his aunt was ill; but promised to be here by half-past eight this morning.

PEPPER.—Promised, my dear Mrs. Ruffle! a young man's promises—you should have been wiser than that, I see it all plainly now: I thought there was a little coolness yesterday. He is off—clean off—gone to the Midnight Sun, or some uncome-at-able place, or he may have started in the new Cunard Steamer—she was to sail to day.

MRS. RUFFLE (*in dismay*).—Do you really think he is gone off, and won't come back?

PEPPER.—How can I think otherwise?

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh, dear! what will poor Jemima do? And such a nice, handsome young man too; and such a fine estate. But you don't think he has really gone for good?

PEPPER (*shaking his head*).—Depend upon it, he is: I have known many such cases. There was young Dashaway just the same: bridal party all assembled in full dress—bride in blushes and orange flowers—the Bishop impatient—the breakfast waiting—but no bridegroom, there he was going as fast as an express train could take him.

MRS. RUFFLE.—And did he come back?

PEPPER.—Three years after with an Italian Signora as his wife.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Shocking, abominable! There ought to be some especial punishment for such wicked doings. But you don't often hear of such things.

PEPPER.—Not often hear of such things, my dear Mrs. Ruffle? why, they happen every day? I could bring you a hundred such instances. There was Singleton Smith, a fine handsome young man with no end of money, passed the church door—absolutely passed the church door—on the very morning on his way to California. The poor bride saw him from the window, and was in her grave within a week.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Oh dear! you quite terrify me. How shocking! Poor dear Jemima! Can nothing be done, Mr. Pepper? You are her guardian, you know: and you, too, Mr. Placid, standing in the place of my poor deceased husband. Can nothing be done?

PLACID (*calmly looking up from his book*).—Done about what, my dear Mrs. Ruffle?

MRS. RUFFLE (*pettishly*).—Done about what, indeed! why about Mr. Worthy to be sure. Have you not heard what we were talking about?

PLACID.—I heard you were talking, but as it was not to me, I did not pay much attention to what you said.

MRS. RUFFLE (*sharply*).—You never pay attention to anything, Mr. Placid; one might be hanged, drowned, shot, burned, before

your face, and you would never find it out. The bridegroom is not come. What is to be done?

PLACID.—Wait patiently till he arrives.

PEPPER (*aside*).—Patiently, patiently! I hate your patient men; they always put me in a passion.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Wait patiently, indeed! We have waited more than an hour, as you see by the clock; and what is to be done now?

PLACID.—Wait a little while longer: he will be here presently, I daresay, and all be right.

PEPPER (*aside*).—"Let them alone, and they'll come home, and bring their tails behind them." I hate people who say it will be right presently; they always put me in a passion.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Presently, indeed! It daresay he won't come at all.

PLACID.—I daresay he will, my dear Mrs. Ruffle, only don't get impatient and get yourself in a flurry.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Get impatient and put myself in a flurry! Is a bride to be kept waiting in this way! It is a shame! a disgrace! she will be the talk of the whole country. As Jemima's guardian, you ought to call Mr. Worthy to account for keeping us all waiting in this way.

PLACID.—I daresay he could not help it, poor young man, and will give some good reason for the delay.

MRS. RUFFLE.—That's just what Jemima says; but he can give no good reason, I am sure.

PLACID.—If Jemima says so, you may be sure it is all right.

MRS. RUFFLE.—I am sure it is all wrong; but you have no consideration—no sympathy; you cannot understand a mother's feelings (*putting her handkerchief to her eyes*). Poor dear Jemima! She has no father or brother to protect her: if my poor dear husband were but alive—(*Sobs*).

PLACID.—Don't distress yourself, my dear Mrs. Ruffle; Mr. Worthy will be here in a few minutes, I daresay, and explain all to your satisfaction: remember his place is six miles off.

MRS. RUFFLE.—And what is six miles to a lover?

PEPPER.—Right, Mrs. Ruffle; what is six miles to a lover? I hate your slow men, they always put me in a passion. He should have flown on the wings of love.

PLACID.—I daresay he is coming as fast as horses will bring him. There may have been a little accident, which has made him late. I thought I heard a carriage just now.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Late, indeed!

PEPPER.—Late! Depend upon it, he is off, and will never come back at all.

Enter the BRIDEGROOM *in haste.*

WORTHY.—A thousand pardons, my dear Mrs. Ruffle, for keeping you waiting.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Yes, waiting, indeed! Poor dear Jemima is not accustomed to be kept waiting: it is little short of an insult to her.

PEPPER.—It is an insult to the whole party, Mr. Worthy—an insult to her mother, to her guardians, to her bridesmaids, and to all the guests. We all feel the indignity.

WORTHY.—I am exceedingly sorry—

MRS. RUFFLE (*interrupting him*).—So you ought to be, keeping every one waiting, and putting poor dear Jemima in such an agony; and then my feelings too.

PEPPER.—And all our feelings.

WORTHY.—I am very sorry indeed; but how could I help it? I—

PEPPER (*interrupting him*).—You should have got up earlier. Oversleep yourself on a wedding day!

WORTHY.—I have not been in bed since three, but———

PEPPER (*interrupting him again*).—You should not have been so long dressing; I hate your dandies, they always put me in a passion.

WORTHY.—I was only half an hour dressing for the wedding; but my aunt——

PEPPER.—Should not have been placed in competition with your bride, her mother, her guardians, and all the guests.

WORTHY.—But——

PEPPER AND MRS. RUFFLE (*together*).—There should have been no *but* in the case.

WORTHY (*in despair*).—Will you hear me out? I am late, but——

PEPPER AND MRS. RUFFLE (*together*).—Too late by an hour.

WORTHY.—I own it, but my aunt was supposed to be dying, and I could not leave her till pronounced out of danger. Jemima would have blamed me had I done so.

MRS. RUFFLE.—Why not send and say so?

WORTHY.—I did when I found I could not arrive in time, but by some mischance, which I had not time to learn, I outstripped my messenger. I hope now, my dear madam, you and Jemima will acquit me of blame. I am late, but——

PLACID.—Say no more about it, Worthy, but lead in Mrs. Ruffle. I said you would come presently, and give a good reason for the delay. You are late certainly, but—you know the proverb—— (*nodding to* PEPPER).

[*Exeunt;* WORTHY *leading* MRS. RUFFLE, *followed by* PLACID.

PEPPER (*muttering as he goes out*).—Proverbs, indeed! I hate your men who are always in the right, quoting proverbs to prove it: they always put me in a passion. [*Exit.*

CURTAIN.

A SOCIETY FOR DOING GOOD.

BY H. ELLIOTT MCBRIDE.

CHARACTERS.

MRS. SUSANNAH RIDDLE, *a widow.*
MRS. KEZIAH RAYMOND, *a widow.*
MISS MERVILDA MARIGOLD, *an old maid.*
MISS JEMIMA JENKINS, *a poetical old maid.*

SCENE.—*A room.* ALL *seated engaged in sewing.*

MRS. RIDDLE.—It was a purty good idee tew organize a S'ciety fur the purpose of doin' good. We hev already made up a consid'able pile of clothin' fur the poor people of the neighborhood.

MRS. RAYMOND.—And a person allers feels so much better too when the said person is doin' somethin' fur till relieve sufferin' humanity. I allers come to these meetins with a great deal of alacrity, and so forth, and I think we ought all to come in the same way.

MISS MARIGOLD.—Yes, that's so. We hev the poor all around us; and who is goin' to put garments upon their backs and pantaloons upon their—upon their—limbs, if we don't do it? Yes, we are engaged in a glorious work, and the single men of the neighborhood will certainly take notice of what we are doin'.

MISS JENKINS.—

Yes, let us work, and work, and work away,
Fur we hev the poor around us purty nigh every day.

MISS RAYMOND.—O, Jemima! you do say sich heart touchin' poetry. It seems that you can say poetry without any diffikilty whatever.

MISS JENKINS.—Yes, I believe I am gifted in that way. And I allers endeavor to feel thankful that I am so gifted. It may be that I shill some day be able with my poetry to move a nation to tears.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Wall, neow, it would look kinder funny if yeou should git the hull United States tew cryin' at one time. Wouldn't it make a hullabaloo?

MISS JENKINS.—Susannah, you do not understand much about poetry and sich things; poetry is not a thing to make a person cry and holler out loud jist like a boy that had got whipped fur stealin' apples. On the contrary, poetry is a thing which moves you to tears silently, as it were. Poetry is a thing which has a subduin' and a softenin' influence upon a person.

Poetry which is got up in the right way,
Will make a feller feel soft fur one whole day.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Then yeou ought tew git up some po'try and read it tew Ebenezer Williams. He needs softenin' deown wuss than anybody I knows on. He has a bad, wicked heart, and the way he swears it is tremendous.

MRS. RAYMOND.—Those people which hold in their hand the power fur till do good, are great people. You are sich a person, Jemima, fur by your po'try you kin do a heap of good. Jemima,

you are a poetater and you should be looked up to by all the surroundin' nations.

MISS JENKINS.—Yes, I know I am gifted; and I feel thankful fur it. I know I hold in my hand a wonderful power. But I feel the responsibility of my position. All those people which write poetry occupy a responsible position in society. If there are no objections I will rise and read a poem which I writ last night.

MRS. RAYMOND.—I'm sure I do not raise any objections. Fur my part I think we should allers be willin' fur till listen to the readin' of poetry, fur I think poetry is calculated fur till do us all a vast amount of good. By all means let us hear the poem.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Wall, I expect the piece of poetry which yeou hev writ is purty good, but fur my part I don't keer nothin' abeout it. I'd a heap ruther we'd all hurry up and git this sewin' done. This shirt which we are a makin' fur Bob Long ought tew be finished, fur Sam Jackson sez as heow he hasn't got no shirt but jist an old one which will skurcely stick together.

MISS JENKINS.—Susannah, I fear that the love of poetry and the fine arts does not dwell in your constitution. But, of course, I do not want to read my poem unless you are all agreed fur it.

MISS MARIGOLD.—We are engaged in a glorious work. We are puttin' clothes upon them which need clothes. But we must pause in our work fur till listen to the poem which has been writ by sister Jenkins. It may do us good; it may cause an uprisin' in our bosoms; and it may cause us to go forward to our work with greater power and swifter velocity.

MISS JENKINS.—But I feel delikit about readin' my poem if anybody objects. It appears that Susannah Riddle doesn't care about hearin' the poem, and therefore I feel delikit about reading it.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Oh, go ahead and read the poem if yeou want tew. There ain't no use in makin' so much fuss abeout it. We could hev it read while yeou are talkin abeout it. I don't keer nothin' abeout the piece of poetry one way nor t'other, but I think we ought tew hurry up and git this shirt made for Bob. Long.

MISS JENKINS.—It seems to me that some people are snappier than they need to be. People that ain't poetaters themselves

oughtn't to git cranky and feel jealous toward them which are poetaters.

MISS MARIGOLD.—Let us hev the poem, Jemima. We are engaged in a glorious work. I suppose a gloriouser work was never got up. I feel purty sure that the men sect will look on encouragin'ly and also approvin'ly. Yes, Jemima, let us hear the poem, and it may encourage us in our work.

MISS JENKINS.—Well, what do you say? Shill I read my poem or shill I not? Of course if there are any here who don't want to hear it I shill feel delikit about readin' it.

MRS. RIDDLE (*aside*).—Sakes alive! she's talkin' about that poem ag'in. (*To* MISS JENKINS.) Oh, yes, I'd advise yeou tew read it and git it off yeour mind.

MRS. RAYMOND.—Oh, yes, Jemima, do read the poem. I am wantin' to hear it awful bad. You are a poetater of great power and you ought to be looked up to by everybody, fur you can do a vast amount of good in this world.

MISS JENKINS (*rising*).—Then I shill perceed to read it. My voice will probably be a little unsteady, but I hope you will excuse that. It always makes me feel somewhat weak and trimbly to read my own pieces of poetry. Now I shill begin. The name of the poem is

WORK WHILE THE SUN IS SHININ'.

Work while the sun is shinin'
  Work while it is called to-day;
For after awhile the sun will go down,
  And then you cannot make the hay.

Work while the sun is shinin'
  Just like the bumble bee;
Get up in the morning and work away,
  For after awhile the night will come on and then you cannot see.

Work while the sun is shinin'
  Time is flying and soon it will be gone
Let the needle fly swiftly through the cloth
  For after sundown the night comes on.

The horse is a useful animal,
  He has four long legs and a head;
The horse can pull a big load on a wagon
  Or he can pull a big load on a sled.

Does the horse waste his time doin' nothin'?
Does he sit around and do nothin' all day?
No, the horse is a noble animal,
And he doesn't sit around all day.

There now lies a great work before us;
Shill we do that work pretty soon?
Shill we do that work right away,
Or wait till the light of the moon?

We now all around are arousin';
We're goin' to rise up and do good;
Don't you think that's proper and becomin?'
Don't you think we're doin' as we should?

The horse is a good institution,
The cow is a useful one too.
We live in an age of progression,
And now I will bid you adieu.

This piece it was writ with a pencil;
I writ it last night by the fire;
I sat up till half-past twelve o'clock,
And I writ it last night by the fire.

(*Sits down and takes up her sewing.*)

MRS. RIDDLE.—And when yeou got done yeou ought tew hev turned areound and stuck it intew the fire.

MISS JENKINS.—Some people can't write poetry themselves and it makes them hoppin' mad when other people write it and thereby git's ahead of them. Oh, it's a dreadful think to be so envious!

MRS. RAYMOND.—O, Jemima, that is a beautiful and also an exquizitical poem, and I am so glad you hev read it. It will cheer me up in my lonely hours and also make me sew with great alacrity upon the garments which we are now a makin'.

MISS MARIGOLD.—Jemima, I wish to add my praises to the article which has jist been read. It is a heart touchin' poem and it is calculated to stir us up in the glorious work in which we are now engaged. Could we git into a gloriouser work if we should seek all our lives fur sich a one? No, my sisters, we could not, and the people around us, particularly the male sect, will gaze upon us with awe-inspired countenances. Some of the male sect are now beginnin' to look upon us with considerable interest.

Martin Ray said to Deacon Wexford t'other day that we must be noble women when we will go to work and work fur the poor around us. He said most women wanted to spend all their time and money in gittin' clothes fur themselves. And, sisters, I'll tell you a secret. Martin Ray has called at our house twice since this Society was started.

Miss Jenkins.—And he has come twice to see me. He also likes my poetry. He says I ought to continue to write and I'll become famous pretty soon. He said some other things too, which wouldn't be proper fur me to make public.

Miss Marigold.—I don't believe he has been over to see you at all. He don't care nothin' about you. Leastwise he said somethin' of that kind to me. You are just pretendin' that he has been over to see you, so as to get me mad and to tell him to stop comin'. I know you, Jemima Jenkins. I know what you'd do. You'd say a'most anything to git a beau. That 's the reason you took to writin' poetry. You thought you'd ketch somebody that way. And sich poetry as it is too! It aint nothin' but trash. I heerd a man talkin' about your poetry t'other day, and he laughed awful hard and said it was the awfulest poetry he ever heard.

Miss Jenkins (*rising and throwing down her sewing*).—I hev endured this as long as I can endure it. Sisters, can I sit here and be vituperated by sich an old maid as Mervilda Marigold?

Miss Marigold.—I ain't an old maid. Don't say that again. I ain't as old as you are, and I don't tell lies.

Miss Jenkins (*continuing*).—I am full of indignation. I can skurcely contain myself. I feel like springin' upon Mervilda Marigold and tearin' her limb from limb and branch from branch. Was ever a woman so foully dealt with—so shamefully handled—so cruelly—so cruelly knocked around as I have been this evening? I thirst for revenge. What has Mervilda said? Mervilda has said that Mr. Ray has not visited me. Mervilda has also said that I tell lies. Can I endure sich an outpourin' of slander? But I will restrain myself. I am a poetater and it becomes poetaters to stand aloof from common people and not mingle with them. I understand my position and I shill treat Mervilda Marigold with silent contempt. (*Sits down with great dignity.*)

MRS. RIDDLE.—I hev a beau too. He commenced a comin' tew see me since this S'ciety started.

MRS. RAYMOND.—Susannah Riddle, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, fur till be talkin' about beaux. Hezekiah Riddle hasn't been dead more'n six months, and I think you ought to wait awhile before receivin' company.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Oh, but you know this is a very lonely world. I hain't nobody tew keep me company but ony five children, and it is but nateral fur me tew be lookin' forward tew the time when I shill be again united tew a good and useful man. Hezekiah was an excellent partner and he was a good provider too, but he is gone, poor, dear man, and it ain't doin' him no injustice tew be lookin' around for another companion.

MRS. RAYMOND.—May I ask who the gentleman is that is visitin' you?

MRS. RIDDLE.—Yes, I don't mind tellin' yeou. It is Daniel Dover.

MRS. RAYMOND (*springing up*).—Daniel Dover comin' to see you! It's false! He is comin' to see me and he despises you.

MRS. RIDDLE.—Wall, neow, Keziah, yeou needn't cut up no shines abeout it. When a man is comin' tew see me I reckon I am cognizant of the fact. I aint one of 'em as lets my temper rise. If I was I wonld'nt allow you to jump up that way and call me names. S'posin' yeou sit down ag'in and keep cool.

MRS. RAYMOND.—You're jist tryin' fur till git Daniel away from me, but you shan't hev him. You pretend to be very industrious and try fur till make the men sect believe that you joined this S'ciety fur till help the poor. But I know you, Susannah Riddle, you just joined so as to ketch a beau. You old critter, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, running' after the men sect when Hezekiah Riddle hasn't been dead more'n six months.

MRS. RIDDLE (*springing up and dashing towards* MRS. RAYMOND).—I'll settle yeour business if I git a hold of yeou. (MRS. RAYMOND *runs out pursued by* MRS. RIDDLE.)

MISS MARIGOLD.—They're gone (*giggles*) He! he! Susannah has chased Keziah clean out of the house. (*Pauses and awaits a reply from* MISS JENKINS.) I say they're gone. Susannah has

chased Keziah clean out of the house. (*Pauses again and awaits a reply.*) Why don't you speak?

Miss Jenkins.—I am a poetater and I consider myself above you. I do not want to mingle words with you. You ain't of no account.

Miss Marigold.—Martin Ray thinks I am purty nice, anyhow. I must go home fur he's comin' to-night. (*Going.*)

Miss Jenkins (*springing up*).—Stop! Don't say that again. 'Tis false!

Miss Marigold.—Good-bye, old poetater. [*Exit L.*

Miss Jenkins.—She's gone. I must go too and see about this. Can I give up Martin Ray? Never! [*Exit L.*

CURTAIN.

THE RECEPTION;

OR,

"A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED."

By Ellen Pickering.

(*See note to Dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE," page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Wyvill.	Mrs. Harriet Wyvill.
Mrs. Wyvill.	Franklyn.

Sir Frederick Thompson.

SCENE.—Mr. Wyvill, *his* Wife *and* Mrs. Harriet Wyvill.

Mr. Wyvill (*looking up from an open letter before him*).—Shameful imposture, truly! I wonder who the kind friend is who has written to inform us of it. It is well the news arrived in time. No wonder he was so urgent to have the wedding at once—so impatient at any delay. How could he have the face to seek my daughter's hand! I suppose he thought in these se-

cluded parts we should never hear the truth; nor should we but for this unknown friend. Poor Bessy!

MRS. WYVILL.—Yes, poor Bessy, indeed! I thought she would have cried her eyes out last night. Not that she believes one word of the letter.

MRS. H. WYVILL.—No wonder, poor thing. Who could hear him talk as he did, and suspect him of such baseness? Oh! the deceitfulness of men!

MR. WYVILL.—A thief, a swindler, an impostor! and to think of his having nearly become my son-in-law. Well for him he is not here. He will find out that he is discovered, I dare say, and keep far enough off. Better not let him cross my path. Ha! who is that? the impostor himself!

Enter FRANKLYN, *who advances eagerly with outstretched hand, which no one takes, but all start up in surprise, and stare at the visitor.*

FRANKLYN (*astonished*).—What is the matter? My presence seems neither welcome nor expected.

MR. WYVILL.—You speak truth, sir, for once: you were not expected, and your absence would be preferred to your presence.

FRANKLYN.—How so, my dear sir? What can you mean. I wrote Bessy word I should be here to-day, if possible.

MR. WYVILL.—How dare you "dear" me, sir? How dare you name poor Bessy?

FRANKLYN (*alarmed*).—Poor Bessy! is she ill, sir? Tell me, I entreat you? Let me see her?

MR. WYVILL.—See her! you are more likely to see the constable. See poor Bessy, indeed!

MRS. WYVILL.—See poor Bessy, indeed!

MRS. H. WYVILL.—See poor Bessy, indeed!

FRANKLYN.—Poor Bessy again: what can this mean?

MR. WYVILL.—Ask yourself.

FRANKLYN.—I am utterly at a loss to comprehend it. As the betrothed of your daughter, I have a right to demand an explanation.

MR. WYVILL.—You would carry it with a high hand, young man, would you? Have a care, the constable is within call. You will never be son-in-law of mine.

FRANKLYN.—The constable, sir! What mean you by this insult?

MR. WYVILL.—Oh! you are going to play the bully; but it won't do—it won't do, I can tell you. Yes; the constable to take off the swindler.

MRS. WYVILL.—The thief!

MRS. H. WYVILL.—The impostor!

FRANKLYN.—Swindler, thief, impostor! Sir, I insist on an explanation.

MR. WYVILL.—You had not better wait for that, but be off at once. Depart in silence, or I shall have you arrested, immediately. To think of you deceiving me, and my innocent child; and then coming to brazen it out. Be off.

FRANKLYN.—Not till I know the meaning of your words: I have deceived no one.

MR. WYVILL.—That is lie the hundredth. Did not you call yourself Charles Franklyn?

MRS. WYVILL.—Did not you say you were nephew to the Hon. Henry Lionheart?

MRS. H. WYVILL.—Did not you say you had an income of fifteen thousand dollars a year?

FRANKLYN.—Yes, I said all these things; and I say them again.

MR. WYVILL.—Monstrous!

MRS. WYVILL.—Oh!

MRS. H. WYVILL.—Oh!

MR. WYVILL.—Villain!

MRS. WYVILL.—Wretch!

MRS. H. WYVILL.—Monster! (*all hold up their hands in horror*).

FRANKLYN (*aside*).—Why they must be all struck with sudden madness. What a family I am going to enter! If I loved Bessy one iota less, I would make my bow and be off. But she may be gone mad too: I will insist on seeing her. (*Aloud.*) Since I can obtain no explanation from you, sir, I must seek one from Bessy.

MR. WYVILL (*stepping between him and the door*).—Get you gone: you shall never see Bessy again. She was engaged to marry Charles Franklin, not Jeremiah Brown, alias Jones, alias Jenkins, and alias half a dozen names beside.

FRANKLYN.—Is this the way, sir, you seek to free yourself from an engagement no longer agreeable? I heard it said you would prefer another as a son-in-law, but could not believe the report. Better have said so at once, than invented injurious lies.

MR. WYVILL.—Lies! Well for you if they were lies. Hold up your right hand—not so, without the glove. There, there is full proof of your guilt, and yet you pretend to look innocent.

FRANKLYN (*aside*).—Madder than ever! (*Aloud.*) Proof of guilt in my hand? There is nothing the matter with my hand. (*Looks at it in every direction.*)

MR. WYVILL.—That ring is witness enough against you. It was stolen from a jeweller six months ago. Ha, Ha! you start, and look astounded: robbery like murder, you see, will come out.

MRS. WYVILL.—And that watch-chain too, that came from the same place.

MRS. H. WYVILL.—And that pin! Everything exactly as the letter says.

FRANKLYN.—You must all be gone mad together, to accuse me of such things.

MR. WYVILL.—Then others are mad too. Ay, ay, you thought it would not be found out. Poor Bessy! to be near marrying such a wretch.

MRS. WYVILL.—Poor Bessy! A vile impostor.

MRS. H. WYVILL.—Poor Bessy! to be near marrying a thief.

FRANKLYN (*looking in amazement from one to the other.*)—If this is meant for a jest, it has been carried far enough; if meant in earnest, I must insist on knowing who makes these accusations.

MR. WYVILL.—Jest! oh, no! it is no jesting matter. Here (*taking up the letter*) we have it from one who knows you well and describes you exactly, ring, chain, and pin.

FRANKLYN.—Let me see. (*Reads.*) A vile invention, sir. Either a hoax, or the malice of a rival.

MR. WYVILL.—You expect me to think so, do you! Old birds are not caught with chaff.

FRANKLYN.—On my honor, sir, it is all a lie. Only give me time, and I will prove it so.

MR. WYVILL.—Will you! Where did you get the ring?

FRANKLYN.—In Paris.

MR. WYVILL.—And the chain?

FRANKLYN.—At Geneva.

MR. WYVILL.—And the pin?

FRANKLYN.—At Florence.

MR. WYVILL.—Cunning rogue! none bought in this country, Thief, villain——

FRANKLYN.—Hear me, sir——

MR. WYVILL, HIS WIFE, AND SISTER, (*all at once*).—No, we have heard enough—thief, imposter, knave.

FRANKLYN (*passionately*).—I will be heard. I am all that I have said.

Enter a SERVANT, *who whispers to* WYVILL, *and puts a paper into his hand.*

MR. WYVILL.—Are you Mr. Jeremiah Brown, alias Jones, alias something else?

FRANKLIN.—I tell you I am Charles Franklyn.

MR. WYVILL.—Then who is this? (*Reads from the paper.*) Tall, well-made, erect, dark waving hair, fine dark eyes, straight nose, small mouth, handsome, good address, plausible in conversation, suspected of having robbed Tiffany & Co. of a large amount of jewellery, consisting of pins, chains, ring, etc. (Look in the glass if it is not you.) A reward is offered to whoever will give information that will lead to his conviction.

FRANKLYN.—It is impossible you can believe this meant for me.

MR. WYVILL.—There is one of the New York police without. What do you suppose he will think of the matter?

FRANKLYN.—Call him in, and let me be cleared at once.

MR. WYVILL.—Certainly. Bid him come in. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter a POLICEMAN.

FRANKLYN.—Now, sir, you will find your mistake, and may regret the insults heaped upon me. (*Turning to the* POLICEMAN.) Have you ever seen the Jeremiah Brown described in this paper?

POLICE.—Two or three times.

FRANKLYN (*joyfully*).—So much the better, since your testimony must establish my innocence. Am I this Jeremiah Brown, alias Jones?

POLICE (*positively*).—Yes, you are.

MR. WYVILL, HIS WIFE, AND SISTER (*all speaking at once in great excitement*).—There, there! what do you say now? Thief, villain, vile impostor?

FRANKLYN (*looks astounded, but recovers himself after some moments*).—Look again and own your mistake.

POLICE.—I am not often mistaken in these things. You are Jeremiah Brown, alias Jones. I am not to be beaten out of my belief by bullying airs.

MRS. WYVILL.—Horrid monster! What an escape for poor Bessy!

MRS. H. WYVILL.—Vile wretch! And to think how well he talked.

MR. WYVILL.—Out of the frying-pan into the fire, young man. You would have the police called in; and now you must take the consequences.

FRANKLYN.—On my honor, you are all mistaken.

MR. WYVILL (*with a sneer*).—I have heard of honor among thieves.

FRANKLYN.—You will repent this, sir.

MR. WYVILL (*mockingly*).—I suppose so. And what will you do at the prison?

FRANKLYN.—My innocence can soon be proved.

MR. WYVILL.—Can it?

POLICE.—Come along, young man: no use talking here. You can prove your innocence at the police court. You may as well come along quietly,

FRANKLYN.—I have letters here which will prove my identity.

MR. WYVILL.—Letters stolen from their rightful owner, as this informs me (*pointing to the letter*).

FRANKLYN.—Will you believe nothing I say?

MR. WYVILL.—Nothing, Mr. Jeremiah Brown.

FRANKLYN.—Nor you, Mrs. Wyvill? (*The ladies draw back in horror, holding up their hands exclaiming, Monster! villain!*)

POLICE.—Come along. Don't you see how you frighten the ladies?

FRANKLIN.—One instant. Let me write a note to request the presence of Mr. Frederick Thompson, the celebrated lawyer, he knows me well.

MR. WYVILL.—Surely a plan to gain time; you know he is not in the country. I say, Mr. Jeremiah Brown, alias Jones, we are all gone mad, are we not?

FRANKLIN (*bitterly*).—I believe you are; but it is waste of words to say more now.

MR. WYVILL.—Exactly so. Take him away, and mind you keep a sharp look out after him (*nodding to the* POLICEMAN).

POLICE (*with a knowing wink*).—Trust me for that (*takes* FRANKLYN'S *arm*).

Enter MR. FREDERICK THOMPSON *in haste.*

FRANKLYN (*joyfully breaking from the* POLICEMAN *and rushing to* MR. THOMPSON).—Just in time, Thompson, to save me handcuffs, and perhaps a prison; at least, if the wishes of my father-in-law could have affected it. Never did I stand in more need of your aid.

MR. THOMPSON.—Why, what is all this? I heard some nonsense about your being a thief, so galloped hither ready to break my neck to give you a good character. You owe me a horse, Franklyn, for I have broken the wind of mine in your service.

FRANKLYN.—You shall have the best in my stalls.

MR. WYVILL.—Is that really Franklyn then, not Jeremiah Brown?

MR. THOMPSON.—To be sure, who says he is not?

FRANKLYN.—One who should have known better—Bessy's father.

MR. WYVILL (*in some confusion*).—It was the fault of this letter.

MR. THOMPSON.—Ha, ha, ha! A hoax of Boynton's; I could swear to the turn of his expressions. How could you be so taken in?

MR. WYVILL.—But the policeman swears it is Jeremiah Brown.

MR. THOMPSON.—Then he is forsworn, and I will report him, and have him dismissed from the force, if he persists in the lie. Why, I have known Charles Franklyn from the hour he was born, and will vouch there is not a finer fellow in this country. If I had twenty daughters he should take his choice. So get along with you: I met the real Jeremiah Brown on his way to

New York yesterday, escorted by two of your tribe. (*The* POLICEMAN *sneaks off.*) Why, Wyvill, how foolish you are looking, like a goose which can't make up its mind which leg to stand on. Come, come, own yourself in the wrong, and hold out your hand, Franklyn is not unforgiving. There, there, that is right. (*Joins their hands.*) Bessy was wiser, I will be bound.

MR. WYVILL.—Yes, Bessy would not believe a word of it, and would have come down and said so, if we would have allowed it. I cannot think now how I came to believe it.

MR. THOMPSON.—Nor I either. A pretty predicament you were in, Master Franklyn.

FRANKLYN.—I was, indeed; and had not you come just at the right moment, I know not what might have been my fate.

MR. THOMPSON.—Ay, ay! never mind now. "All's well that ends well." I like proverbs.

FRANKLYN.—There is another then which applies more particularly to yourself.

MR. THOMPSON.—Do not say it—leave them to guess it. And now let us run and tell Bessy the news. I will be there first. She was a pretty little thing when I used to dance her on my knee.

MR. WYVILL.—No; I will go and find Bessy myself. It is mainly my own fault that any reliance has been given to an anonymous letter. Wait a moment, I will return without delay.

[*Exit* WYVILL.

MRS. WYVILL.—Oh, Franklyn! How can we ever make amends for our terrible mistake?

Enter WYVILL *and* BESSY.

MR. WYVILL. There, Franklyn! Take her, and forget, if you can, all that I said and did in my folly.

FRANKLYN (*takes both* BESSY'S *hands in his right, and grasping* THOMPSON'S *with his left*).—Dear Bessy—they told me you did not believe a word of it. And, Thompson, my dear fellow, a friend in—

MR. THOMPSON.—All right, Franklyn, every body knows *that* proverb!

CURTAIN.

CAUGHT IN THEIR OWN TRAP.

By Bob O'Link.

CHARACTERS.

Janet Armstrong, *an heiress.*
Ellen Stirling, *her confidential young friend.*
James Montague, *a wealthy young bachelor.*
Henry Parker, *his college friend.*
Mr. Seymour, *an elderly bachelor.*

Costumes.—Suitable for the different characters. Janet, quite stylish; Ellen, lady-like, but much plainer; these two exchange costumes previous to the third Scene.

SCENE I.—*A sitting room.* Mr. Seymour *seated, a letter in his hand.*

Mr. Seymour.—This is indeed unexpected news! Poor Armstrong! We used to be such warm friends, but ever since he settled in Memphis, years ago, with the exception of a letter at long intervals, we have lost sight of one another. So he is dead! (*pause, peruses letter*). He did not forget his old friend, for he has appointed me by his will, guardian to his daughter, a girl I have never seen. A nice prospect, truly! And furthermore, his last request,—so this lawyer's letter tells me,—was that Janet—that's her name—should come to live with me, at least until she was of age and capable of managing her own affairs. Oh dear! what shall I do with a girl of eighteen? A hot-headed southern girl,—no doubt brim full of mischief too! Well, I suppose I shall have to endure it. I'm to expect her on Wednesday, and here it is Tuesday already. I shall have to make some preparations, too—Oh, dear!—I hope she'll get married before the year is out!

Enter JAMES MONTAGUE, *R.*

Oh! James, my dear fellow, glad to see you—I've had quite a shock.—There—read that letter—(*hands letter*).

JAMES (*sits down and reads*).—Ah—Memphis—Armstrong—(*peruses letter*)—Well! I think you ought to be glad to have some one around you to cheer you up.—Waken you up a bit, eh?

SEYMOUR.—Oh yes! Worry me to death, and wake me afterwards. James, you must help me.—The girl's rich, and perhaps—who knows?—eh?—you young rascal? (*rises*). I think I will go down to the Club, and try to get my ruffled spirits quieted a little.—Will you keep me company.

JAMES.—With pleasure. [*Exeunt, R, conversing.*

Enter JANET *and* ELLEN, *L, dressed as from a journey, with parcels and wraps in their hands.*

JANET.—This is too bad, to arrive here and Mr. Seymour gone out! Perhaps it is not his fault, for we are a day ahead of the time arranged for us to arrive. No, matter—let's sit down, for I have a plan to arrange, which you will be a dear good girl and aid me in carrying out.

ELLEN.—A plan! pray what can be your fancy now?

JANET.—I'll tell you. I've been thinking it all over on the journey here, and Ellen, dear, you *must* help me. You see, dear, we are coming among strangers, and can know nothing of the people we shall meet. I've no doubt Mr. Seymour is a grumpy old fellow, and will tell every one that I am a rich girl. You know my distrust of young men, how they lay in wait to catch a girl with money. Now, you know, Mr. Seymour has never seen us.—Well, to cut it short—you shall be Janet Armstrong, and I, Ellen Stirling.

ELLEN.—Oh! Janet!

JANET.—Ellen, if you please—

ELLEN.—I never could carry out such a mad freak as that. I know I should betray myself every minute.

JANET.—Not you! We shall both have to be *very* careful, especially *not* to answer to our own names, and not to forget ourselves when addressed by the names we have assumed. Come dear El—Janet! it may be for only a short time—won't you?

ELLEN.—Well Jan—I mean, Ellen—I will try—but Oh! I'm sure we shall be caught before an hour is past. Come—Ellen—let's go and arrange matters more fully, and change our dresses, Miss Madcap. [*Exeunt, L.*

Enter MR. SEYMOUR *and* JAMES, *R, conversing.*

SEYMOUR.—So, she has arrived already,—and what is worse and worse, another girl with her. One was bad enough, but two of them! James, take pity on me,—marry one of them,—and—ah a good idea,—see if you can't persuade your friend Parker to take the heiress off my hands. Tell him—and I mean it, in sober earnest,—I will give him fifty thousand dollars, cash down, on his wedding day if he will only take her.

JAMES.—Good gracious, friend Seymour! what a terror you seem to be in. How do you know that these girls are not nice, charming creatures, and prove a perfect blessing to you in your advancing years.

SEYMOUR.—Charming fiddlesticks! Stay, James, come and dine with us this evening and bring Parker with you. I shall go crazy if I'm left alone with these mad-caps the first evening—will you?

JAMES.—Most willingly. I am all curiosity to see them.—Your fancied torments in petticoats may prove angels in disguise.

[*Exeunt, R.*

SCENE II.—*A bachelor's sitting room, untidy and littered.* HENRY PARKER *sitting at a table, studying.*

HENRY.—This is a queer world. There's that dear fellow, James Montague, rich, handsome, and yet perpetually in fear of matrimony, dreading lest his money should prove a stronger attraction than his own, lovable self. Here am I, struggling for a mere maintenance, unable to marry a *poor* girl, and not daring to approach a rich one, for fear of being mistaken for a fortune-hunter. Truly embarrassing, and a sad prospect. (*Enter* JAMES, *R*). Ah, James! I was just thinking of you, I'm glad you've came. Sit down.

JAMES.—I've come with a pressing appeal from Mr. Seymour, beseeching you to join me in dining at his house this evening. In fact, I took the liberty of assuring him you would not fail to accept.

HENRY.—What in the world do you mean? *He* beseeching and—

JAMES.—Oh! the poor man is half out of his wits. He finds himself all of a sudden the guardian of a rich young girl from Memphis. She arrived to day, with another girl, her companion, from whom she refused to be separated, because she was poor. So he appealed to me to help him to get through what he called his first evening of torture.

HENRY.—Indeed! Well I will consent to be tortured, too.

JAMES.—Poor Seymour! He is in a perfect fever of terror at his house being invaded by a couple of southern mad-caps—that's what he calls them. But, Henry, he's planning already to get rid of them. He offers me the companion, as he knows I have enough for both of us, and what do you think? I assure you he means it, every word,—he says he will give you fifty thousand dollars,—cash down,—his very words—on your wedding day, if you will only marry the heiress. Oh! it's altogether too funny if they should turn out to be charming girls, and—who knows?—Eh?

HENRY.—What? I marry an heiress? and be taken for a fortune-hunter? Never. Besides, I won't be bribed.

JAMES.—Oh! don't you see? *you* cannot marry the companion, so he gives her to me. I tell you what! To be sure! The very thing. I'll fix it all right with Seymour. In the state he is now, he will do anything I ask him. See here, Henry. You and I, with Seymour's entire consent, will change places. *You* shall be the rich young bachelor, and no fortune-hunter at all. I will be the poor young man, and avoid all possibility of being accepted on the score of my money.

HENRY.—It seems a mad project, and may cause some trouble or embarrassment; but the temptation is strong, and I will submit for once to sail under false colors.

JAMES.—Spoken like the good fellow that you are. Come, it's time we started. [*Exeunt R, talking and laughing.*

SCENE III.—*A boudoir. Occasional sounds of soft dance-music off R. Enter* JANET (*as* ELLEN) *and* HENRY *L.*

HENRY—How delightful it is to find a quiet spot, away from the merry throng! Rest yourself a few moments (*she sits down.*

HENRY *walks up and down, excitedly; turns to* JANET). Oh, I can defer it no longer. Miss Sterling! Dear Ellen! Deem me not presumptuous on only three weeks' acquaintance; but I *must* speak; I must learn my fate. I love you. I *love* you. You know it—you cannot but have perceived it. Tell me dare I hope? I have fancied that sometimes my presence was not disagreeable to you. Say, my darling, is it so?

JANET.—Oh! what shall I say? This is so unexpected; if you knew—

HENRY.—If I knew that you *could* love me—*do* love me—But before you answer me, let me confess that you have been deceived—I am not as rich by far as you may have perhaps been led to believe, I am not rich enough to afford you the luxuries you may have hoped for, but only a comfortable and happy home, and a heart which beats but for you.

JANET.—I am glad you have confessed your deception—and I pardon you with all my heart. I will waive all reserve, dear Henry, for I *do* love you. No thought of money ever entered my head; for, I, too, am not what I seem. My name is Janet Armstrong, and I am happy—oh! so happy—to find a true heart is offered me for myself alone.

HENRY.—You! Janet! and rich! Oh, my darling—I care not for your money, but the world will say—will think differently.

JANET.—What matters what the world may say or think. An honest, loving heart is far above all riches. But come, let us go back to the ball-room—or Mrs. Grundy will say we have had a very long flirtation.

HENRY.—Oh, happiness. My own (*embraces her*).

[*Exeunt, arm in arm.*

Enter ELLEN (*as* JANET) *and* JAMES.

ELLEN.—Well! I certainly must give you credit for cool, unblushing enterprise. You take advantage of a wild waltz to hold me fast, whether I would or no, and compel me to listen to such a burst of eloquence, such protestations, such entreaties.

JAMES.—Oh! I have struggled against myself, until I could stand it no longer; and, fairly bewildered by the mad delight of

holding you in my arms, the love of my heart drove me to the avowal,—Oh, bid me not despair.

ELLEN.—Not an hour ago, I was resting in the conservatory, and I had to listen to just such a torrent of fervid words from a gentleman, who happened for the moment to be my partner. A few words from me, however, so dampened his ardor, that I have not even seen him since.

JAMES.—Indeed? But I assure you that nothing you can say, short of cruel dismissal, can prevent *me* from persisting in my endeavors to touch your heart. Oh! tell me, if I have not already the joy of your preference, let me at least try to win you.

ELLEN.—I think you are sincere in what you say, and I confess that if there is to be any absolute dismissal, it will not originate with me—

JAMES.—Enough! I shall—

ELLEN.—One moment,—before you commit yourself too far. The words which saved me from a mere fortune-hunter, I will also say to you. If you hope to win the heart and worldly possessions of Janet Armstrong, I think I can assure you that you will be utterly disappointed. Nay! Hear me out. My name is Ellen Stirling, whose face and personal attractions that you rave about are all that I possess in the world. Now, sir, what say you?

JAMES.—Oh! joy unspeakable! I care not one straw for Miss Armstrong's money. Darling, dare I hope that you love me, and will be mine,—the wife of a poor man like me?

ELLEN.—Yes, Mr. Montague,—dear James! I do love you for you are noble and true.

Enter SEYMOUR, *R, unperceived.*

JAMES.—My own! My Ellen! But you, also are laboring under a slight mistake. Your avowal assures me that your love is true, and for myself alone, unbiassed by worldly considerations. I am not what you have been led to suppose, probably by Mr. Seymour. I am rich, my darling, and have found a still greater treasure in your love, beside which all else to me is dross.

SEYMOUR (*advancing*).—Pretty goings on, indeed. (*to* JAMES) Pray what have you, sir, to say about Mr. Seymour?

ELLEN (*advancing to* SEYMOUR *threatening*).—Oh! you wicked

—deceiving old man! How dare you tell me a pack of falsehoods about James Montague and Mr. Parker! If I had been a mercenary girl, I might have lost a noble heart, through your wickedness!

SEYMOUR.—You vixen! How dare *you*—

Enter JANET *and* HENRY, *L.*

HENRY.—Mr. Seymour! what in the world are you saying? What does this all mean!

JANET.—Oh! I can guess what it is. (*To* SEYMOUR.) You bad, bad man! How dare you tell me that Henry was a rich man, and make it possible for him to suspect that I was after his money! Answer me! you dreadful old fibber, you!

SEYMOUR.—Another tiger! Oh, a regular hornet's nest. (*Angrily to* JANET.) As for you, you wild-cat! I thank my stars that I have nothing to do with *you*. Go—scratch out anybody's eyes you please! (*to* ELLEN.) But *you!* You minx! As your guardian, I have got *you* under my thumb, at least till you are of age, and you must get *my* consent before you fling yourself at the feet of the first man that comes fooling around you. I forbid—absolutely forbid—you to have anything more to do with—

ELLEN (*laughing heartily*).—Forbid me! Oh, that is too refreshing! *You*, my guardian! No, indeed, you are very much mistaken. I am *not* your ward, but (*with mock humility*) Ellen Stirling, and very much at your service.

SEYMOUR.—What do you mean? *You*, Ellen! (*to* JANET.) Who then may you be? Another impostor?

JANET.—No—you dear, ill-tempered old guardian—I am Janet Armstrong, your ward; and, in spite of your being sometimes a little ruffled, I think you are dear warm-hearted old man (*raises his hand to her lips*).

SEYMOUR (*relenting*).—Well, of all the wicked girls I ever met! (*aside*) I suppose I shall have to give in, and face it all. (*Aloud*). I must confess that, at the urgent request of Mr. Montague, in an excited moment I agreed to countenance his and Mr. Parker's little deception. (*to* JANET *and* ELLEN.) But I never expected that two chits like you would have the audacity to play such a trick on us all. After all, you have brought sun-

shine into the house of a grumpy old bachelor, and I forgive you, you two dear little bundles of mischief!

JANET.—Dear Guardian, I never for a moment believed that you could believe that we believed—

ELLEN.—What a lot of believing!

JAMES (*by* ELLEN'S *side R.*).—This has been quite a comedy of errors, and I rejoice to find that it has gained for me one true and loving heart.

HENRY (*by* JANET'S *side*).—I congratulate you, James, from the bottom of my heart. My joy, too, is complete; for I have won the only prize that can make me the happiest man alive—and, I am sure, James, you and I are only too happy—

SEYMOUR.—To have been cleverly

CAUGHT IN YOUR OWN TRAP.

CURTAIN.

ELWOOD'S DECISION.

BY H. ELLIOTT MCBRIDE.

[*CHARACTERS.*

FRANK BARTON,	JOHN MORTON,
ELWOOD CHESS,	HARRY MORTON.

SCENE I.—*A road.* FRANK *and* ELWOOD *discovered, apparently in earnest conversation.*

FRANK.—You need not tell your parents that you are going with the steamboat excursion. Just say that the Morton boys want you to go over there to spend the day. They will not object to your going there.

ELWOOD.—But I have never told a lie and I do not want to commence now.

FRANK.—That will not be a lie. You need not say that you are going to visit the Morton boys. Just ask if you may go there.

ELWOOD.—That would be acting a lie, and that is just as bad as telling a lie.

FRANK.—You are very particular about a little bit of a fib. I wouldn't stop for one if I could get to go on a steamboat excursion. And the excursion will be splendid—I know it will. There will be music on board and such a nice time in the grove.

ELWOOD.—I would like to go, but my parents would not allow me. They think there is too much noise and excitement about these excursions.

FRANK.—Pooh! Now for once, Elwood, don't be a dunce. Come along and you will never regret it. I will meet you at the cross roads and we can go together to the village.

ELWOOD.—But I don't think—

FRANK.—Oh, stop your talk. I would'nt be such a chicken as you are for a thousand dollars. Stay at home then, if you think it would be such an awful thing to go without the consent of your parents. Stay at home and miss all the music and the fun.

ELWOOD.—I believe I will go. I suppose it will be no harm if I go once without my parents' consent. I have always done as they told me.

FRANK.—Of course you have, and they will not care for your going even if they do find it out. But you need'nt say anything about it. They will think that you have been over to visit the Morton boys. I will meet you at the cross roads at nine o'clock. The boat will start at ten.

ELWOOD.—Very well, I will be there.

[*Exit* FRANK, *R.*, ELWOOD, *L.*

SCENE II.—*Another road. Enter* ELWOOD, *L.*

ELWOOD.—I am here according to appointment, but I have made my mind that I will not to go with the excursion. I asked father if he would allow me to go over and spend the day with the Morton boys, and he said he would. I suppose the steamboat excursion will be very nice, but I have made up my mind that I will not go. They would find out sometime that I did not go to Morton's, and anyhow I don't think it would be right. The excursion would not be very pleasant to me either, for I would keep

thinking all the time that I had deceived my parents. No, I will not go. I promised to meet Frank here, and I will wait until he comes, and then I will go on to Mr. Morton's. I can have a splendid time with John and Harry Morton. I believe I will enjoy myself more there than I would to go with the excursion.

Enter FRANK, *R.*

FRANK.—Good morning, Elwood. You're here in good time I see. But let us walk on.

ELWOOD.—I have decided that I will not go.

FRANK.—Will not go! You don't say so. What has come over you now?

ELWOOD.—I asked permission to go to Mr. Morton's and that's where I'm going.

FRANK.—Pooh! don't be a dunce. Come along with me and we'll have a glorious time.

ELWOOD.—I have never deceived my parents and I don't want to commence to-day.

FRANK.—Oh, you'll have no fun over at Morton's. Better come along.

ELWOOD.—No, I will not go. I have decided.

FRANK.—You're a poor chicken-hearted boy. Run along to Morton's. Don't do anything to offend your excellent parents. Now, before I go, let me tell you what I think of you. You're a nice little mamma's boy—a sort of a lamb or a sheep, or something of not much account. I would'nt be such a boy for a thousand dollars—can't go any place—can't do anything without asking your good papa and mamma. Bah! I don't want to talk to such a boy. I want to get away from you as soon as possible.

[*Exit* FRANK, *L.*

ELWOOD.—Well, I think I shall feel better at Morton's with my parents' consent to go there, than I should feel if I had gone with the excursion. [*Exit* ELWOOD, *R.*

SCENE III.—*A lawn or play ground.*

Enter ELWOOD *and* HARRY, *R.*

ELWOOD.—We have had a nice time to-day.

HARRY.—Yes, I think we have had splendid fun.

ELWOOD.—Now, when will you and John come over and play with me? Can't you come next Saturday?

HARRY.—Not next Saturday. I think father wants us to help him do some work that day. But I think we can go in a week from next Saturday—two weeks from to-day.

ELWOOD.—I think I will have my new croquet set by that time and we can have several games. Be sure and come and tell John to come too.

Enter JOHN, *L.*

JOHN.—I have a sad piece of news to communicate.

HARRY AND ELWOOD.—What is it?

JOHN.—Father has just come home and he says that the steamboat, which the excursion went out in to-day, struck a rock off Raymond's point and she filled and went to the bottom.

HARRY.—Oh, isn't that dreadful!

ELWOOD.—Where there any lives lost?

JOHN.—Yes, there was about twenty drowned. The remainder got safely to land. A boy from our neighborhood was drowned.

HARRY.—Who?

ELWOOD.—Not Frank Barton?

JOHN.—Yes.

ELWOOD.—Oh, is he drowned? And I came near going too.

HARRY.—You! I thought your father didn't approve of boys going on steamboat excursions. Our father wouldn't hear to our going.

ELWOOD.—I did not ask to go, for I knew my parents would not consent, but Frank talked to me about it, and at last I said I would go with him. After I had thought the matter over I decided that I would not deceive my parents and act a lie, and I met Frank according to appointment this morning and told him so. I feel sorry for Frank. Just to think of it! This morning he was alive and well and now he is dead. If I had gone I might have met the same fate.

HARRY.—Oh, Elwood! I'm so glad you did not go.

ELWOOD.—It certainly has been a narrow escape for me; and the bitter way Frank jeered at me for standing out against his attempts to persuade me almost shook my resolution for a

moment. But I knew that all my pleasure would be spoiled, if I went, by the consciousness of doing a wrong thing.

HARRY.—That's exactly why I am so glad. Of course we should all be dreadfully sorry if any accident had happened to you, but I am so glad that you had the courage to resist temptation. Poor Frank's fate will be a terrible blow to his father, not only from the sudden loss, so utterly unexpected, but from the fact that Frank had deceived him. I know that Mr. Barton forbade him to go on the excursion.

JOHN.—This is a terrible lesson to all of us, and should teach us, in a manner that we can never forget, that truthfulness and obedience are the only guide to happiness.

ELWOOD.—I think we shall all remember this sad occurrence. Good-bye, I must be off. [*Exit* ELWOOD.

JOHN.—What a narrow escape for Elwood!—Come Harry, let's get home. [*Exeunt.*

CURTAIN.

THE REPORT;

OR,

"LEAST SAID SOONEST MENDED."

BY ELLEN PICKERING.

(*See note to Dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE," page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

MR. SILENT, MRS. PRATTLE. MRS. SILENT.

SCENE.—MR. SILENT *reading; enter* MRS. SILENT *in a flurry.*

MRS. SILENT.—Oh, my dear, only think! Selina Audrey is going to marry Mr. Frederick Jones. Did you ever hear of such a thing?

MR. SILENT.—I heard it was settled three weeks ago,

MRS. SILENT.—You heard it was settled three weeks ago! And why did you not tell me?

MR. SILENT.—What was the use of telling you? I knew you would not be asked to the wedding, or there would be plenty of time to buy a new bonnet if you should.

MRS. SILENT.—What is the use? That is just what you always say. As if one did not like to know what one's neighbors were about. I declare I am quite ashamed of my ignorance very often. I never hear that anyone is dying, or going to be married, till it is all over. And where did you hear this?

MR. SILENT.—Out hunting.

MRS. SILENT.—Yes, all news is hatched or told out hunting. Don't talk of tea-table gossip, it is nothing to hunting coffee-houses. But I declare I don't see the use of your going hunting; you never tell me anything.

MR. SILENT.—What is the use of spreading reports?

MRS. SILENT.—That is just what you always say, and so I never know anything. It seems so unkind not to congratulate one's friends on a wedding in the family.

MR. SILENT.—Ten to one if there is not more cause for condolence.

MRS. SILENT.—Dear me! Have you heard anything about MR. Jones?

MR. SILENT *continues reading.*

MRS. SILENT (*impatiently*).—My dear why don't you answer? Have you heard anything of Mr. Frederick Jones?

MR. SILENT.—Yes.

MRS. SILENT.—What have you heard?

MR. SILENT.—A great deal.

MRS. SILENT.—But what, my dear—what? You are so tiresome; one has to drag every word from you by question upon question. What have you heard of Mr. Jones?

MR. SILENT.—That he is a bachelor.

MRS. SILENT.—I knew that before. What else?

MR. SILENT.—His mother lives in Boston.

MRS. SILENT.—I knew that too. What else did you hear?

MR. SILENT.—They say he is short.

MRS. SILENT.—Pooh! I heard that before too. Is he rich?

MR. SILENT.—I have no special opportunity of knowing.

MRS. SILENT.—What do people say about his fortune?

MR. SILENT.—Some say it is large.

MRS. SILENT.—Is that all you know about it? Then I can tell you, my dear, something you have not heard before. He has gambled away all his fortune, and has not a dollar left.

MR. SILENT.—I heard that a month ago.

MRS. SILENT.—And never told me! not even just now when I questioned you so closely. You really are enough to make an automaton scold. Where did you hear it?

MR. SILENT.—At the Exchange one morning.

MRS. SILENT.—There, that is just as I said before; you never tell me anything. I don't see the use of being your wife, or of your going to the Exchange, if you are never to tell me anything. Mr. Prattle tells his wife all he hears, as husbands should.

MR. SILENT.—Better if he did not.

MRS. SILENT.—I don't see that at all, my dear. What are tongues for, if not to be used?

MR. SILENT.—We have two ears to one tongue, which proves that we should only tell half what we hear.

MRS. SILENT.—I don't see that at all. We have two legs to one head. Does that mean that we are to walk twice as much as we think.

MR. SILENT.—Most do who are not bedridden.

MRS. SILENT.—We should never know anything about our neighbors if that was to be the case; besides, you never tell more than a quarter of what you hear: no, not even that.

MR. SILENT.—More than enough if I do; your neighbors will get on quite as well without your talking of them.

MRS. SILENT.—But it makes one look so foolish. You told me the other day that Mrs. Hampden had a boy, but never told me she had twins, and there was I saying all manner of silly things in consequence.

MR. SILENT.—You need not have said anything. Least said is soonest mended.

MRS. SILENT.—Not say anything when one's friend has twins, Mr. Silent? Was there ever any one like you? Why, you are worse than a heathen. Then you told me Miss Welsh was going to be married, and when I went to congratulate her, lo, and be-

hold! it was all off again; and she looked red, and I looked red, and we all looked red and foolish together.

MR. SILENT.—That comes of meddling in your neighbor's concerns. Had you held your tongue, as I do, no one would have looked red or foolish.

MRS. SILENT.—Hold my tongue when my friend's daughter is going to be married! Did any one in their senses ever say the like? Indeed, my dear, you grow worse and worse. If you had told me that the match was off, I should not have seemed so like an idiot.

MR. SILENT.—You never asked me that.

MRS. SILENT (*pettishly*).—Ask! that is always the way with you: I must make out a list of our friends and neighbors, and ask you every morning whether each one is well or ill, going to die, or going to be married.

MR. SILENT.—Better not; let them alone. Don't meddle with others, and they will not meddle with you.

MRS. SILENT.—And so never know what is going on in the world!

MR. SILENT.—The world would go on quite as well, and you much better.

MRS. SILENT,—I cannot say I think so, my dear, and wish you would tell me all you hear.

MR. SILENT.—I would rather not, my dear: the country would soon be in a blaze if I did.

MRS. SILENT.—Well, my dear, I must say it is very unkind to be so uncommunicative. Mrs. Prattle always knows everything.

MR. SILENT.—And tells everything too: she may pay for this one of these days.

MRS. SILENT.—Mr. Silent, what can you mean?

MR. SILENT.—Time may show.

MRS. SILENT.—There, that is just like you; giving no answer at all, or one that tells nothing. But here comes Mrs. Prattle herself.

Enter MRS. PRATTLE, *who shakes hands with* MRS. SILENT, *but, in her hurry, overlooks* MR. SILENT.

MRS. PRATTLE.—Oh, my dear Mrs. Silent, oh!

MRS. SILENT.—My dear Mrs. Prattle, what is the matter; you

are panting and trembling like a coursed hare. Have you heard of any more marriages?

MRS. PRATT.—Oh, my dear Mrs. Silent, pray never name the word marriage again: I shall hate it to my dying day. Oh dear! we are in such trouble! such distress! Would you believe it? Mr. Frederick Jones is in a great rage, because some one has set about that he has lost all his fortune by gambling, and he talks of prosecuting Mr. Prattle and myself: only think how shocking—I, a lady, to be dragged into a court of justice. I am sure I did not set it about; I only repeated what Prattle told me, and he heard it out hunting, and I told Mrs. Ready and her nieces and Mrs. Finch and her daughters not to repeat it. I am sure everybody knew it as well as we did—the whole town was talking about it ten days ago. I am sure you must have heard it, my dear.

MRS. SILENT (*looking reproachfully at her husband*).—No, indeed, Mrs. Prattle, I never heard anything of it till this morning: my husband is not like yours, he never tells me anything.

MRS. PRATT.—I wish Mr. Prattle had not told me this. Only think, our names put in the papers, and the counsel saying all kinds of things, and every one going to hear: and then perhaps to pay large damages beside. I am sure I did not mean any harm and would make twenty apologies. Do you think Mr. Silent could speak to Mr. Jones?

MRS. SILENT (*turning to her husband*).—Do you hear, my dear, the trouble poor Mrs. Prattle is in?

MR. SILENT.—That comes of talking.

MRS. SILENT.—She only said what everybody else said.

MR. SILENT.—Better if everybody held their tongues.

MRS. SILENT.—Oh! my dear, what a very stupid world it would be then: as dull as a quakers' meeting. But do you hear, Mr. Jones is going to prosecute Mrs. Prattle for saying he gambled away all his fortune?

MR. SILENT.—Yes, my dear, I knew that an hour ago.

MRS. SILENT.—And never told me!

MR. SILENT.—No, my dear, and if Mr. Prattle had not told his wife they would not have been threatened with prosecution now. This comes of talking, as I said before. I have no advice to give

on the subject further than to recommend to your notice an old proverb which suits your case, and recommends keeping the mouth shut. Good-morning. [*Exit* MR. SILENT.

MRS. PRATTLE (*sharply*).—People who are too selfish and indolent to give aid can give advice and quote proverbs! Good-morning. [*Exit* MRS. PRATTLE.

MRS. SILENT.—I wonder what proverb he meant? Eh! now I know. Well, perhaps if Mrs. Prattle had not talked so, she would not have got into this trouble. We must all take care what we say. Oh! How glad I am that my husband does'nt tell me all he hears. If he did, I should be in just as much trouble as Mrs. Prattle.—Oh, he's right! What an escape for me! Yes—that proverb is worth its weight in gold!

[*Exit, holding her finger on her mouth.*

CURTAIN.

THE REFORMED MORMON TIPPLER.

BY H. ELLIOTT MCBRIDE.

CHARACTERS.

JOSEPH SMITH SYMINGTON, *a Mormon.*
JULIANA EVALINA,
SALLY ANNA ROXALINA, } *his wives.*
LUCY ANNA SERAPHINA,

SCENE I.—*A Room neatly furnished.*

Enter JOSEPH SMITH SYMINGTON, *intoxicated, R.*

JOSEPH.—I guess this 's er right place—hic. I'll sit down a spell anyhow. (*Seats himself on chair near C.*) If this shouldn't be er right house I reckon there 'd be a fuss. But I think 's er right house; (*Looks around.*) looks like er right house, anyhow. Yes, there's er pic'er of my three wives—hic—I've got three wives. (*Laughs.*) He! he! an' they 're purty fine women. There's

Juliana Evalina, that's one, an' then there's Sally Anna Roxalina an' that's two, an' lem me see, who's the other one? [(*Counts on his fingers.*) There's Juliana Evalina and Sally Anna Roxalina—yes, that's their names—well, that's one, an' there's Lucy Anna Seraphena, an' that's two, an'—lem me see, who's the t'other one? There's Sally Anna Lucy Jane Roxalena (*confused*) an' there's Juliana Sarah Matilda Evalina. There must be somethin' wrong; I can't get it straightened out, nohow. I thought I had got my wives' names so I could go over them as slick as er multiplication table, but I can't. I've got em mixed up. I'm drunker 'n I thought I was—hic. I 'spect my wives will get up a fuss about this spree of mine; they're down on my spreein' and drinkin', but I s'pose —hic—I don't care a great deal. This'd be a poor country if a feller couldn't take a snifter when he felt like it.

Enter JULIANA EVALINA, *L.*

JULIANA (*raising her hands in astonishment*).—Oh, Joseph, is it possible?

JOSEPH (*rises with difficulty and takes off his hat*).—Hello, Julivina Seraphena (*staggers and sits down on chair*), Constantina Martha Washingtona, how d'ye do now? Give me your hand, my fair buzzum pardner—hic. Come ter me fur I can't go ter you. I'm sort'f unsteady—got a sore foot, you know—can't walk much—hic—that is, not a great deal—un'erstand?

JULIANA.—Oh, Joseph, Joseph. I could sit down and weep bitter, bitter tears.

JOSEPH.—You could? I bet yer couldn't. Anyhow—hic—what'd be the use? What'd be the good of weepin' bitter tears? Jis' don't say anything about this scrape, Evalena Constantina Washingtona and it'll soon all be over. You see—hic—I met a feller an' he thought he ought ter treat, an' then I thought *I* ought ter treat an' then in the nex' place he thought *he* ought ter treat—hic—an' we kep' up this thing till we got purty bad foozled.

JULIANA.—Oh, Joseph, Joseph, did I ever think you would come down to this?

JOSEPH (*straightening up*).—Come down to which? But it don't make any difference—hic. Is the supper ready? What yer goin' ter have for supper?

JULIANA.—The last time you came home intoxicated didn't you promise me, and didn't you promise us all three that you would never drink again?

JOSEPH.—Which?

JULIANA.—Oh, Joseph, Joseph, I am sad. My heart sinks within me when you come home intoxicated. (*Weeps loudly.*)

JOSEPH.—I ain't 'tossicated—not a bit—only jist a little foozled or boozled, but can't jist—hic—say which it is.

Enter SALLY ANNA ROXALINA, *R.*

SALLY ANNA.—Oh, dear! oh, dear! Is Joseph drunk again?

JOSEPH.—No, I ain't drunk again. What makes you think I'm drunk again? Look me in the face an' tell me if you think I look like a man that would git drunk again.

JULIANA.—Oh, this is sad, this is sad!

SALLY ANNA.—Terrible! terrible!

JOSEPH.—What's ter'ble? I don't see nothin' ter'ble.

SALLY ANNA (*severely*).—Sir, did'nt you promise me that you would never drink intoxicating liquor again?

JOSEPH.—Never made sich a promise in all my born days.

SALLY ANNA.—He's so drunk he does'nt know what he's doing.

JULIANA.—Yes, he does'nt even know my name. He's been calling me Seraphina and Constantina and Martha Washingtona and half a dozen other names. He is very drunk. Don't you think we ought to put him to bed?

JOSEPH (*springs up, throws out his arm as if to strike then staggers back into his chair*).—I dare any man ter put me ter bed. Jis' let a man try an' I'll shoot him on the spot.

SALLY ANNA.—Oh, don't get excited about nothing. If you don't want to go to bed stay where you are. You are not fit to go to bed. We only wanted to put you there to get you out of sight. The proper place for you would be in the hog-pen.

JOSEPH (*rising and standing unsteadily*).—Look here, woman, —hic—you claim to be a wife of mine.

SALLY ANNA.—Yes, I'm a wife of yours and it's a nice position to be in now, isn't it?

JOSEPH.—I jis' want ter ax you one quession. Is it the square thing fur you ter call the wife of yer buzzum a hog? (*Sits down.*)

SALLY ANNA.—I said the proper place for you now was in the hog-pen. And that's just what you are. Any man that comes home as drunk as you are *is* a hog.

JOSEPH.—Yes, jis' 'zactly. If you've got anything ter say jis' say it; that's er way I do.

Enter LUCY ANNA SERAPHINA, *L.*

LUCY ANNA.—What does all this mean? (*Looks at* JOSEPH.) Is it possible? Is it possible that my dear Joseph Smith Symington has gone and quaffed from the intoxicating bowl and become bewildered and befuddled once more?

JOSEPA.—Gone and quaffed from the 'tossicating what and done which?

LUCY ANNA.—Oh, my dear Joseph. I had hoped that you would never again raise the flowing bowl to your lips. But the deed is done, and you are bewildered, befogged, befuddled and inebriated.

JOSEPH.—Is that what it is?—hic. Why Sally Anna said I was drunk.

SALLY ANNA.—And you are too. I never saw you as bad before.

JOSEPH.—Now, look'ee here; don't jis' git at an' git up a fuss 'bout nothin'. I s'pose I tuck a drop too much, but what's the diff'ence? I'll git over it an' then I'll kiss all round and make up.

SALLY ANNA (*her voice gradually rising*).—I don't want any drunk men kissing me. If you like whisky better than you do me you can just go and kiss the whisky jug. (*Speaks loudly and excitedly.*) I've put up with this kind of treatment long enough and I'll not have any more of it, and if you ever come home drunk again I'll larrup you till you howl again.

JOSEPH.—Be carm, Sally Anna, hic—be carm. You give me more trouble than both the t'other wives combined. You are what the Scrip'ers would call er brawlin' woman. These other wives are the bawlin' women and you're the brawlin' woman. See? (*Laughs.*) He! he! Tha's purty good joke. (*Rises*) I guess I'd berrer go ter bed. (*Staggers and attempts to sit down again.* SALLY ANNA, *who is behind him, pulls the chair and he sits down on the floor.*) Thunder an' lightnin'! what was that? Somethin' struck me. (*Sits on the floor.*)

JULIANA (*weeps*).—Oh, Joseph, Joseph!

LUCY ANNA (*weeps*).—Oh, such a woful catastrophe!

SALLY ANNA.—I'm not going to cry any more over him. A drunken man always disgusted me. (*To* JOSEPH.) I say, Joseph, ain't you going to bed?

JOSEPH.—I ain't quite sure on that p'int. I thought I'd go, but somethin' or other struck me an' knocked me's flat as a flounder.

SALLY ANNA.—Pooh! nothing struck you. You fell just because you're too drunk to walk. (*To* JULIANA *and* LUCY ANNA.) Come, let us give him a lift and get him out of sight. (*They assist him to rise and steady him as he goes off.*)

SALLY ANNA.—Now straighten up and don't go walloping over again.

LUCY ANNA.—Oh, how mortifying and excruciating!

JULIANA.—Oh, Joseph, Joseph! this accident will cause me to shed many bitter, bitter tears. [*Exit* JOSEPH, *L.*

LUCY ANNA.—What's to be done now?

SALLY ANNA.—As far as I'm concerned I know what's to be done. If he comes home drunk again I'll be as good as my word and give him a thrashing he'll remember for awhile.

JULIANA.—I have a plan. Let us all act drunk and probably he will feel as much disgusted as we do now.

LUCY ANNA.—That's a good suggestion, and if he keeps on getting drunk we'll keep on acting drunk. If we act well he may become disgusted and promise to reform.

SALLY ANNA. It may do some good. When shall we get on our drunk.

JULIANA.—Let it be to-morrow evening and in this room. When he comes home we will all be as drunk, apparently, as he is this evening.

SALLY ANNA.—But will he not suspect that we are only acting.

LUCY ANNA.—We are not willing to taint our breath with the nasty stuff, but we can have the smell of liquor on our clothes and this will assist greatly in deceiving him.

JULIANA.—That's a good suggestion. Then it is settled. We will meet here to-morrow at five. I must go now.

LUCY ANNA.—It is to be hoped that our play will not be in vain.

[*Exit* JULIANA, *L.*, LUCY ANNA *and* SALLY ANNA, *R.*

SCENE II.—*Same as first.* JULIANA, LUCY ANNA *and* SALLY ANNA *discovered seated. Their dresses are untidy and their heads tousled.*

JULIANA.—It is nearly time for him to come.

LUCY ANNA.—I think I hear his footsteps now.

SALLY ANNA.—Yes, it is Joseph. (LUCY ANNA *and* SALLY ANNA *rise.*) Now let us act well our parts. Lucy Anna and I will retire and you may talk to him for awhile.

[*Exit* LUCY ANNA *and* SALLY ANNA, *L.*

JULIANA.—I hope our little play will have a good effect upon Joseph. The love of strong drink is growing upon him and we must strive with all our power to prevent him from becoming a drunkard.

Enter JOSEPH, *R.*

JULIANA (*rising and speaking loudly*).—Hello, Joe, how de do? (*Staggers as she goes to meet him.*) How de do?

JOSEPH (*stopping in astonishment*).—What's the matter, Juliana?

JULIANA.—Nothin's the matter, old boy; nothin's the matter. I'm drefful glad ter see you. Where've you been and where are you goin' an' what are you goin' to do when you git there? Why don't you give me a kiss jist like you used to? You look't me like's if you did'nt know me. But I reckon you're only actin' out. I'm your wife, Juliana Evalina.

JOSEPH (*aside*).—Is it possible that the woman's been drinking?

JULIANA.—Well, if you won't talk to me I'll go and sit down again. (*Staggers.*) I can't walk very straight anyhow. Things seem to be kind 'f unsteady round here. (*Going towards chair.*) I wish that chair'd keep still for a minute and a half, if I can ketch it I'll sit down. Fact of the matter is, I don't feel like standin.' Things have got to whirlin' round so that I kind 'f think it's not very safe to stand. (*Springs at chair as if to catch it and after some difficulty in turning herself round she seats herself.*) Now I guess I've got you and I'll stick to you. What's er use of gittin' up to meet Joe when Joe won't speak nor gim me a kiss nor nothin'? If Joe wants ter kiss me now he'll have ter come here. I ain't goin' ter run after Joe nor anybody else.

(*Leans back in her chair and looks at* JOSEPH.) Joe, what yer talkin' about? I hain't heard you talk so fast for a long spell. Jist hold on now and let me git a word in edgeways. (*Pulls a bottle out of her pocket.*) I reckon Joe'd think I had enough for one time, but I don't think so, I've got started now and I'll go ahead. (*Takes a drink out of the bottle.*) Tha's pur'y good cider or gooseberry bran'y or whatever it is. I tell you it jis' warms me up an' makes me feel glorious. (JOSEPH *seats himself on a chair and seems to be very much distressed. He covers his face with his hands.*) I guess I could sing a song. I feel more like singin' now than I've felt for six weeks. If I could git the pitch I would go it. (*Sings as if to obtain the proper pitch.*) Do mi do; do si la sol mi do. (*Sings "Little Brown Jug" and flourishes the bottle.*)

"My wife and I live all alone
In a little log hut we call our own;
She loves gin and I love rum—
I tell you now we've lots of fun.

CHORUS.—Ha, ha, ha, you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee?
Ha, ha, ha! you and me,
Little brown jug don't I love thee?

JOSEPH (*straightening up and speaking with severity*).—Juliana, what do you mean? Don't you know you're disgracing yourself and disgracing the children? Throw that bottle away and get up and go to bed.

JULIANA.—Throw that bottle away and do which and go how?

JOSEPH.—I say go to bed. You've disgraced yourself and me too. This is awful—terrible!

JULIANA.—Oh, no, this isn't ter'ble—this 's jolly! Haven't felt so glorious for six weeks. I could sing all night. Jis' hold on till I give you another touch of the "Little Brown Jug." (*Sings again and flourishes her bottle.*)

"If I had a cow that gave such milk
I'd dress her in the finest silk;
I'd feed her on the choicest hay
And milk her forty times a day."

Enter LUCY ANNA, *L., carrying a bottle. She joins in and assists* JULIANA *in singing the chorus.*

"Ha, ha, ha! you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee?
Ha, ha, ha! you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee?

JOSEPH (*to* LUCY ANNA).—Is it possible that you are drunk too?

LUCY ANNA.—Well, that's nothin'. You git drunk, Joe, an' hain't I jis's good a right to git drunk as you? I ain't goin' to do as I have been doin'. I want ter have some fun; I want ter git on a bustification occasionally. Isn't that fair? It's purty jolly ter git on a drunk—yes, it's awful jolly, and I ain't much surprised that you like it so well. (*Staggers.*) I guess I'd better sit down.

JULIANA.—Yes, sit down. Things are mighty unsteady round here.

LUCY ANNA (*seats herself*).—I wish my neck was about three feet long. (*Holds up the bottle.*) This tastes awful good as it goes gurglin' down. Juliana, let us go it again.

JULIANA.—Here we go. (JULIANA *and* LUCY ANNA *flourish their bottles.*)

JOSEPH.—Oh, this is terrible, terrible! Two of my wives drunk and probably the other one in the same condition. Oh, I am disgraced forever.

LUCY ANNA.— Look 'ee here, Joe; don't be so unreasonable. I ain't so awful drunk but I can argufy the case. Didn't you get drunk yesterday and disgrace us? Then haven't we a right to get drunk to-day and disgrace you? Isn't time about fair play?

JOSEPH.—Yes, I know I did wrong, but it is awful to see women drunk. It always makes me sick.

LUCY ANNA.—And it always makes me sick to see a man drunk. It is a very disgusting sight. But I'll tell you how it is Joe. We've been thinkin' the matter over and we've concluded that if you are goin' to go on and get drunk and disgrace us, we'll go on and get drunk and disgrace you. If we have to go to destruction we may jis's well go a flyin' and all go together. We'll have to go anyhow and we may as well go rapidly and feel jolly as

we go. Juliana, Lets have another song. (*Raises her bottle and drinks.*)

JULIANA.—Yes, we'll have another song. (*She sings, assisted by* LUCY ANNA.)

Tune, "*John Brown's Body Lies Mouldering in the Grave.*"

Our Joseph got upon a burst and gave himself away,
Our Joseph got upon a burst and gave himself away,
Our Joseph got upon a burst and gave himself away.
But we will go along.

Enter SALLY ANNA, *L.*

SALLY ANNA.—Hello, Joe, how de do? How's all the folks?

JOSEPH.—And you're drunk too!

SALLY ANNA.—Yes, 'f course. I may jis's well have a—hic—jolly as you. If you go on a bender, why can't we go on a bender? That's the question. If you run round and drink at the droggeries—hic—why can't we drink at home? I tell you, Joe, it's kinder joyful to git on a bender. Now, when we've got it started s'pose we jis' keep it up. Let's keep drinkin' away—hic—and drinkin' away until we are clean out of money and the children haven't got a rag to their backs. Wouldn't that be jolly for the children? Of course it would. The children wouldn't care, and—hic—and if they did care what'd be the diff'ence? (*Staggers.*) I guess I'd berrer sit down. (*Seats herself.*)

JOSEPH.—I feel that I am painfully disgraced.

SALLY ANNA.—That's jis' the way we felt about it last evenin'. You came home drunk and made us all feel mis'able—hic—and now we've got on a high and you feel mis'able.

JOSEPH.—Oh, dear! oh, dear! (*Sits down and seems to be in deep distress.*)

SALLY ANNA.—Juliana, let's have another song.

JULIANA.—Guess I'd better take another dram before I commence.

SALLY ANNA.—Give me the bottle. You do the singin' and I'll do the drinkin'.

JULIANA.—Guess not, Sally Anna; I can do both jis 's easy as not.

JOSEPH.—I beseech you, wives, don't drink any more—don't. I implore you.

SALLY ANNA.—What's the difference for one or two drams?—needn't be so partic'lar. I've got started on a big jolly and I want to go ahead.

JOSEPH (*rising and speaking earnestly*).—Listen to me. I have a proposition to make to you if you are not too drunk to give it consideration.

JULIANA.—Go ahead with your proposition, Joe.

LUCY ANNA.—Yes, we are ready to hear.

SALLY ANNA.—Speak out, Joe.

JOSEPH.—I'm afraid you are all to much intoxicated to understand.

SALLY ANNA.—I feel purty glorious, but I guess I can understand. Go ahead.

LUCY ANNA.—Yes, Joseph, proceed.

JOSEPH.—If you will each promise me that you will never drink another drop of intoxicating liquor I will make the same promise to you.

JULIANA.—It's a bargain, and here's my hand on it. (*Staggers up to* JOSEPH *and he takes her hand.*)

LUCY ANNA.—I'm agreed too, and I make the promise. (*Staggers up to* JOSEPH *and extends her hand.*) Here's my hand, Joe.

JOSEPH (*takes her hand*).—I am really glad to obtain your promise. Now, what do *you* say, Sally Anna?

SALLY ANNA.—Fact of the matter is, I like whisky mighty well. It sort of enlivens me and makes me feel happy and glorious.

JOSEPH.—But on account of the children you ought to give it up. Think of how they will be disgraced if you continue to drink.

SALLY ANNA.—Well, jes's you say. (*Staggers up to* JOSEPH *and extends her hand.* JOSEPH *takes it.*) I give you my promise that I will never again drink intoxicating liquor of any kind.

JOSEPH.—And I promise you all the same.

JULIANA.—Joe,—we accept the conditions, and expect you have power enough to fulfill them as thoroughly and as conscientiously as we shall.

JOSEPH.—Indeed I will.

LUCY ANNA.—We believe you. But, please make no mistake.

We would not soil our mouths with liquor on any account. We are all as sober as you are.

SALLY ANNA.—Certainly we are. It was only a little plot of ours to shew you how ridiculous, how repulsive, a person is when intoxicated; to let you see yourself as others see you.

JOSEPH.—Oh—I am glad to find that your inebriation was not real, after all. Although drunkenness is terrible in a woman, I begin to see that it must be almost as bad in a man. You have given me a lesson which shall not be thrown away upon me. My hand upon it. (*They all grasp his right hand.*) [TABLEAUX.

CURTAIN.

THE FORTUNE HUNTER

OR,

"LISTENERS NEVER HEAR ANY GOOD OF THEMSELVES."

BY ELLEN PICKERING.

(*See note to Dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE," Page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

CAPT. SEYMOUR DE HAUTEVILLE.	MR. GOSSIP.
MRS. BOND.	MISS CLEAVE.

Enter CAPTAIN SEYMOUR DE HAUTEVILLE, *with a conceited air.*

DE HAUTEVILLE.—Tolerably successful, I guess. Made a sensation, 'pon honor. Thought my mustaches would do the work. Nothing like mustaches! They give me a military look, and then, they are so convenient to twirl when one does not know what to say. One can make a twirl so expressive: it can so plainly say—keep your distance—I am Sir Oracle—I defy you—or, and above all, I love you; and yet you have not committed yourself in words. Then it hides an ugly mouth,

not that this is my case—the De Hautevilles are famous for their mouths. A capital idea that, my dropping the Smith and taking the name of Hauteville. As well have no name as Smith: there is nothing distinctive—nothing *distingué* in it—every third man is a Smith: it designates our individual sex no more than the word man. There are men—there are Smiths: six of one and half a dozen of the other, it seems to me: true, there have been some distinguished men of the name, for whom one would not care to be mistaken, but the ill-natured world will be sure to saddle me with all the follies, vulgarities, and impertinences of all the Jack and Tom Smiths under the sun; ay, and under the moon too. Wise woman, my godmother—would have me christened Seymour—aristocratic name that—very. Yes, yes I shall drop the Smith, and be Seymour de Hauteville till I have made my fortune, and won an heiress. There is a great deal in a name, let poets say what they will. How should poets know anything of the way to get on in the world? Poor, beggardly fellows: never know where to get a meal? Who ever heard of poet making his fortune?

"The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

Pooh, give me

"The feast of turtle, of champagne the flow."

Seymour de Hauteville is no poet, thank the fates: he will make his fortune—he will marry an heiress—Marry for love, indeed! And what is love? A mere fancy—an immaterial nothing. Can you see it? can you touch it? can you weigh it? can you measure it? above all, can you eat it? can you drink it? can you sell it? No, no: marry for money; that is the thing. Gold can be seen, touched, measured, weighed; and will furnish forth baked meats and boiled; fish, fowl, and frothy cream. I have two heiresses in my mind—two strings to my bow. There are Miss Cleave and Mrs. Bond. They have no beauty, to be sure, that is, in their faces; but then their pockets! A griffin's head looks handsome when gilt. Mrs. Bond has three thousand a year certain, they say; and her husband, the great broker, some think, left her more: but she took care to have all her fortune settled on herself, and she might do that again. Widows are apt to be knowing—they have been behind the

scenes, and are not so easily deceived or wheedled. Then Miss Cleave, the great timber-merchant's daughter, has $500,000 at her own disposal. To be sure, they say, she is rather sharp edged: never mind, two can play at that: she may cut me, nevertheless I will *cleave to* her. Ha, ha, ha! Rather a clever thing that; but no one ever gives me credit for saying clever things. Yet no, I will not quite decide till I have seen them again: I should not like to drive either to despair. Both seemed struck with me, but I am used to that; with my face and figure it could not well be otherwise. (*Looks at himself conceitedly in a glass from top to toe*). Hark! there are voices coming this way. Mrs. Bond and Miss Cleave as I live, with Dicky Gossip. I catch the words—distinguished stranger. That must mean me. I will just slip behind this screen, and hear what they say, before I decide which lady shall be honored with my hand: Of course, they will praise me; but there is no one here to see my blushes. (*Goes behind the screen*).

Enter Mrs. Bond, Miss Cleave, *and* Mr. Gossip.

Mrs. Bond.—Do you know anything of that whiskered, mustached, dirty-looking little man who would dance with me last night at the Assembly? I did not wish the introduction, being very particular on that point, but he was so pertinacious that at last I consented. Mr. Seymour de Hauteville, I think, is his name. His flattery was really fulsome.

Gossip.—There are few people, I believe, Mrs. Bond, of whom I do not know something. I never confine myself to one line of study, but make myself acquainted with most things. This Mr. de Hauteville, as he chooses to call himself——

Miss Cleave.—Should change his name to de Basseville. I never met with such vulgar, impertinent, self-sufficiency in my life.

Gossip.—Just so: his name is no more de Hauteville than mine is: it is Smith. I have been at great pains to ferret this out: you know I never rest till I have found out the truth.

Miss Cleave.—Smith! What, that vulgar, pushing Tom Smith, that Captain Benson was talking of yesterday.

Mrs. Bond.—Or that horrid, vulgar Jack Smith, I think they called him, down in Jersey.

GOSSIP.—I should not wonder; or that impudent fellow James Smith, who swindled Mr. Dalton out of three thousand dollars.

DE HAUTEVILLE (*aside, behind the screen*).—I knew they would father all the doings of the Tom Smiths, and the Jack Smiths, and the Jem Smiths upon me. I was sure I should have all the sins of all the Smiths to bear, should my real name be known. But what is in a name? I could not help my father being a Smith.

MISS CLEAVE.—False name! He is a swindler, you may be sure. I thought he was from the first with his chains, and his rings, and his forward manner, and large talking.

GOSSIP.—I should not wonder. Look to your watches and brooches, ladies, should he meet you in a lonely place.

MRS. BOND.—It may be as well; yet he talked of his regiment, his brother officers, etc.

GOSSIP.—A month or so with the militia. Nothing more, my dear madam, I assure you. You may depend on my information, for I make it the business of my life to learn the truth about every one I meet. I have no patience with those stupid people who, contenting themselves with the saying that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives, never inquire into the concerns of their neighbors. I have an inquiring mind, and learn all I can. He did not give the name of his regiment, I suspect!

MISS CLEAVE.—Oh, no! and evaded the question when I asked him, but talked very grandly of our mess—and "ours." "*We* never mix with the *canaille—we* never dance but with the highest, richest, and loveliest in the room." Insufferably vulgar coxcomb! I should have cut him short at once last night, but his consummate vanity aroused me. Do you know, Mrs. Bond, he more than hinted that you were particularly struck with him, and insisted on being introduced?

MRS. BOND.—Exactly what he hinted to me of you.

MISS CLEAVE.—The vulgar puppy! A regular swindler. I remember now, he did look at my amethyst necklace with thievish look, and made many remarks on your jewels. It is well we lost nothing last night. Suppose, Mr. Gossip, you give the police a hint just to keep an eye upon him. Depend upon it, he intends

to reap a rich harvest of rings, watches, and brooches. I daresay those he wore were stolen.

GOSSIP.—He expects to reap a richer harvest than that; he expects to marry an heiress—Mrs. Bond or Miss Cleave.

MRS. BOND.—Marry me! The man must be mad, and should be shut up.

MISS CLEAVE.—Marry me! Preposterous! He deserves to be locked-up for the bare idea. I should be in a rage, if I could help laughing at the folly of the thing. Such a dirty-looking, vulgar little coxcomb, to think of winning my hand—a crawling black beetle, that I could scarcely deign to put my foot upon. Ha, ha, ha! Really it is too ridiculous. Mr. Seymour de Hauteville. Suppose we go and give a hint to the police. I think I shall send my jewels to the safe-deposit till he has taken his departure.

MRS. BOND.—Yes, we had better beg the police to keep an eye upon him.

GOSSIP.—You are quite right, and I shall be happy to escort you, lest he should encounter you, and make a snatch at your watches.

MISS CLEAVE.—Very good indeed! [*Exeunt.*

DE HAUTEVILLE (*creeping from behind the screen, and looking cautiously round*).—So they are gone at last. I thought they never would have done. What tongues! But when women once begin, there is no telling when they will come to an end. Sharp indeed, Miss Cleave; I would as soon marry a two-edged sword. And that news-ferret Dicky Gossip! It would be a pleasure to give him a drubbing. An inquiring mind, indeed! must learn everything concerning his neighbors. If he had not found out that my name was Smith, it would all have gone right. Look to their chains and watches truly—let him look to his head! Bid the police keep an eye on me! To think that I should hear all this when I expected to hear them praise me *de haut en bas*. Dirty, vulgar-looking, little coxcomb! when I expected them to be in raptures with my *tout ensemble*. Not a word of ecstasy about my mustache even, that I have been coaxing these six months, keeping myself as secluded as a giant, till they were fit to be seen. I shall be off within the hour: the

game is up here, and never again will I creep behind a screen to listen to what people say of me. Here is a verification of the old adage, indeed. My ears are tingling still.

[*Exit, creeping out.*

CURTAIN.

PETTICOAT GOVERNMENT.

By Miss Chapman.

CHARACTERS.

John Raynor.	Harry Ashford.
Mabel, *his niece.*	Mrs. Wiggins.

SCENE I.—*Sitting-room.* John Raynor *seated reading.*

Enter Mabel *with work.*

John.—Come here, pet, and sit down by the fire! What are your industrious little fingers busy at now?

Mabel.—A pair of slippers for your Christmas present, uncle. Don't you think they will be pretty?

John.—I'll venture their being pretty, without so much as looking at them! nothing that comes from your tasteful fingers could by any possibility be otherwise. What a good little girl it is, to be sure, to be always thinking of uncle John! what can I do in return for such a handsome present?

Mabel (*aside*).—Now is my time to ask him, if ever, while he is in a good humor—(*aloud*)—Uncle—

John.—Well, pet?

Mabel.—Uncle, I was thinking of a present, and a very acceptable one, too, that you could make me, if you were so disposed; and it wouldn't cost you any money, either!

John.—No money, eh? what an economical little puss it is, to be sure! you are a rarity among girls in that respect, Mabel, I must confess! But what is the wonderful present? don't let me do all the talking.

MABEL.—Well uncle, Harry Ashford was here this afternoon, and he said—

JOHN (*interrupting*).—The deuce!

MABEL (*pouting*).—Indeed he didn't use any such objectionable expletive as that at all, uncle John! what he said was vastly more interesting, I can tell you!

JOHN.—Oh I dare say! such nonsense is always wonderfully interesting to a silly young couple not out of their teens! I thought I had put an end to all that fol-de-rol long ago; and I am surprised at you, Mabel, for encouraging him, after I expressly forbade you receiving his visits or attentions!

MABEL.—But uncle—

JOHN.—You needn't say a word! I won't have him hanging around, and that's the end of it! If I see him here again, I'll have a police warrant after him!

MABEL (*sobbing*).—I didn't think you could be so cruel, uncle John! what objections have you to him, pray?

JOHN (*angrily*).—Every objection. Every summer he goes off to the country no one knows where, frittering away his time in the laziest manner imaginable, and comes home with only a lot of unfinished sketches to show as his summer's work, instead of sticking to his profession as young men were obliged to do in my early days. His time is worse than wasted.

MABEL.—You can't expect that the world will remain in the same identical state that it was in in your early days, uncle John! Besides you know his father gives even the clerks a vacation during part of the summer; and Harry as his partner ought surely to be entitled to it. He goes on account of his health; and as he has plenty of money, and can afford it, I don't see that it is anybody's business!

JOHN.—It shall be none of my business or yours, then, to have any thing to do with any such shiftless young fellows! Besides I'm determined to have you marry my nephew George Wilson; what little money I have to endow you with I want kept in the family.

MABEL.—George Wilson, indeed! I'd die an old maid, first! You know very well that I never could endure the sight of him, uncle John!

JOHN.—Just make up your mind to begin and endure him as speedily as possible then; for your destiny as his wife is irrevocably fixed. He's a fine young man, and considered an excellent match; and you may consider yourself well off to be so desirably settled in life; as you would if you were a sensible girl.

MABEL.—Uncle John, you may shut me up in a dark room, or feed me on bread and water, or do any other cruel thing you please, but I never, *never* will marry George Wilson; so there!

JOHN.—I'll give you until to-morrow to get over your foolish tantrum. George promised to call in the evening and I gave him to understand that you would be ready to receive him favorably. So you had better set to work and dismiss that good-for-nothing Harry from your mind, and give George a suitable answer, or I may be obliged to resort to the bread and water treatment, to bring you to your senses. Remember you are under my protection and authority, and I expect to be obeyed.

MABEL.—I'm not going to give up my Harry! it would just break my heart to think of marrying anybody else!

JOHN.—Fiddlesticks! women's hearts are not so easily broken as all that, whatever these highflown romances and ten cent novels may say to the contrary. I'll wager you won't eat an ounce of beefsteak or one biscuit the less, for dismissing Harry! and you and George will soon be good friends enough. So be a sensible girl and obey my wishes, and you shall have a splendid Christmas present, whatever you like, and no matter about the expense.

MABEL.—Go away! I don't want any present or any thing else! there's no use in my attempting to live any longer! I may as well die at once and be done with it!

JOHN.—Oh no fear of your dying! I don't apprehend the slightest decline in your health! I will leave you, now, to get over your sulks; only remember when George comes that I expect you to behave in accordance with my wishes, and that you are not to think of or mention Harry Ashford's name again. If he calls, *I'll* interview him! [*Exit* UNCLE JOHN.

MABEL (*bursting into tears*).—If uncle John is'nt the most heartless man that ever lived! I believe I am the most wretched, ill-used girl on the face of the earth. (*A knock is heard*)—There!

that's some company I suppose! I don't care if it is; they may come right in and see me as I am, and I'll tell them how hard hearted uncle John is to make me so unhappy! Oh dear! oh dear!

Enter HARRY ASHFORD.

HARRY (*throwing his arm around her*).—Why, what is the matter with my rosebud; my jewel? What has happened to destroy my little girl's peace of mind on the very afternoon that I have come to make it all right with uncle John.

MABEL.—Oh Harry, I'm so wretched!

HARRY.—I should think so; if appearances are any evidence! What's the trouble, pet? I'm all attention!

MABEL.—It's no use, Harry! no use in our trying or expecting to be happy! Uncle John declares that I shall marry that odious nephew of his, George Wilson, and he says he will have a police warrant after you if he sees you here again!

HARRY.—Dear me! that's positively awful! makes a fellow feel nervous, I declare! are you sure there is'nt an officer concealed behind one of those heavy window curtains, even now, Mabel, waiting to pounce upon poor unsuspecting me without a moment's warning?

MABEL.—Oh don't make sport of it, Harry! I'm too miserable to laugh!

HARRY.—Well then seriously, my love, do you think that the police force of the whole city, with the militia to back 'em, would keep me away from you? If I thought you loved this George Wilson, I would step out of the way at once, and leave the field free for him, but since you have given me pretty confidently to understand that you prefer *me*, you little rogue, I mean to stand by my banner under all hazards! So let uncle John come on I'm ready for him!

MABEL.—Harry, you make me laugh in spite of myself! But really, uncle John is determined and I am under his control until I am of age, you know, which unfortunately will not be for some time yet. So what to do I don't know, only that I never will marry George Wilson!

HARRY.—Bravo! liberty forever! you are a true descendant of republican ancestors, Mabel! And now let us cudgel our

brains and see what way we can contrive to get out of this predicament. Your sex is given the credit of being more clever than ours, under all circumstances, and in these days of women's rights and petticoat government, you ought to be able to come out "best man," even from such an unpromising looking position as this.

MABEL (*smiling*).—You're right, Harry; I declare you are enough to inspire courage and enterprise in any one! and I will not be the first to bring discredit upon the well merited reputation of my sex for ingenuity and cleverness.

HARRY.—Well done! and now to carry out that most laudable resolution. Let me see—uncle John is not the only relative who was constituted your guardian, is he?

MABEL.—There! you've just hit it, Harry! a most splendid idea has popped into my head! I'll show uncle John that "petticoat government" can circumvent all his schemes and even his authority. Oh how delightful!

HARRY.—Mabel, Mabel, do take some pity on me, and enlighten me as to this delightful project. Don't you see that I am absolutely dying with curiosity?

MABEL (*smiling*).—Take my smelling-bottle Harry! it may revive you a little! But just come a little closer, and I'll tell you.

HARRY (*putting his arm around her and kissing her*).—There! is that close enough? will that suit?

MABEL.—Harry behave yourself; you good-for-nothing fellow! I only meant for you to sit near enough so that no one might hear us!

HARRY (*kissing her again*).—Oh, I understand! Well I'll take that kiss back again, Mabel! so proceed.

MABEL.—Harry, you are perfectly incorrigible! I have a great mind not to tell you a single word, and I don't know that I will, as it is, unless you promise to behave yourself.

HARRY.—Well I promise; so now let me hear this splendid plan that is going to put the enemy to indiscriminate route, and make us all happy for the rest of our natural lives! Don't keep a fellow waiting any longer, that's an angel.

MABEL.—Oh no indeed, I'm not an angel! and I warn you beforehand not to build any extravagant expectations upon such

a hypothesis! But now listen, you rattlebrain and don't interrupt me again. Now listen. (*They converse apart.*) There! Harry, what do you think of that plan.

HARRY.—I have the same opinion of it that I have of its originator, that it is excellent, admirable, incomparable.

MABEL.—Oh don't smother me with your superlatives! Don't you think my plan a feasible one? now do be serious Harry, for once!

HARRY.—What an imputation upon my established gravity of character! But seriously, Mabel, I do think it can be successfully carried out, with a little care and diplomacy, and lead eventually to the results we desire. And then my darling!—

Enter UNCLE JOHN.

JOHN.—What is the meaning of this! how do you presume to enter my house, sir, and you miss, how dare you encourage and countenance him, after my strict commands to you not an hour ago!

MABEL.—Why uncle, he came before I knew it; and I could not send him away, I'm sure!

JOHN (*wrathfully*).—I can, then! Just understand, sir, that I am not to see your face here again! I have the disposal of my niece's hand, and it shall never be given to a person of your thriftless, wandering disposition. I believe we understand each other. I have the pleasure to bid you good-evening.

HARRY.—Good-evening, sir! I am sorry to have incurred your displeasure, and am unconscious of any demeanor on my part that should have deserved it; but since those are your sentiments I can but submit—(*passing* MABEL—*aside*)—Keep up a good heart, chicky! I'll write to you every day, and it will all come out right in the end. I've half a mind to scandalize uncle John by kissing you for good-bye right before him.

MABEL (*pushing him off*).—No, don't, Harry; it would make him so terribly angry. Good-bye.

JOHN.—Young man are you going to start, or shall I call in an officer to eject you.

HARRY.—Don't put yourself to any such inconvenience, sir, I am going immediately. Good-evening.

JOHN.—That's the second time! there is no need of wasting any time in ceremony! the best way you can signify your respect for me, if you have any, is by getting out of my sight as quickly as possible!

MABEL.—Uncle John, I didn't know you were such a bear. I am actually ashamed of you! [*Exit* HARRY.

JOHN.—It's no more than I may expect, I suppose, than to be maligned for doing my duty. That young scamp has received his walking ticket now, in sufficiently intelligible words, I hope, and there will be an end of his coming around here!

MABEL (*sobbing*).—Yes, you can congratulate yourself upon having destroyed my happiness forever, uncle John! However, it's not likely either Harry or myself will trouble you by our company for some time to come, at least!

JOHN.—What do you mean by that, you minx? You haven't been contriving any crazy scheme of an elopement, have you?

MABEL.—You need give yourself no apprehension on that score, uncle John, I'm not one of the eloping kind. But I'm going to pay aunt Mary a visit, and stay through the holidays, possibly until Spring. It was part of the arrangement of your guardianship, that I should have the privilege of spending three months every year with her. I gave it up last year, to please you; but since matters have taken this course, I am resolved to avail myself of what few pleasures I have a right to control; so I shall probably stay six months, this time. If I can't see Harry, at least I will be away from him.

JOHN.—Well, but I don't know about this, Mabel! I don't see how I can spare you, very well. Who's to do the cooking, and tend to things around the house?

MABEL.—So my chief attractiveness lies in the number of meals I prepare, and the amount of work I perform, eh? I am much obliged for the compliment, I'm sure!

JOHN.—No, it isn't exactly that; but I don't think—

MABEL.—It is my privilege, sir, and I shall require it. And as for the cooking and so on, you can hire a housekeeper who will take charge of such matters until I come back.

JOHN.—A housekeeper! Mabel, you know very well that I never could endure to have a stranger around!

MABEL.—We are all obliged to submit to unpleasant inconveniences, sir, and your turn must come with the rest, I suppose. I have set my mind upon going, and I cannot alter my plans on any consideration!

JOHN.—And what is to become of that pair of slippers that I was to have for a Christmas present?

MABEL.—Oh, they can lay over for another year; you have several half worn pairs now, that you can use; and I shall wish to prepare a present for aunt Mary, since I am to enjoy her hospitality.

JOHN.—All right! do as you please, then! a wilful woman will have her way in spite of all odds! You're bound to be the death of me yet, I see very well! What time are you going to start?

MABEL.—To-morrow afternoon, uncle. I'd thank you to have the carriage ready for me in time to catch the three o'clock train.

JOHN.—To-morrow? so soon as that? Why George Wilson is coming in the evening, and expected to see you

MABEL.—I don't believe he would find my society at all entertaining. As it is you will have to make extra efforts at being agreeable, uncle John, as I don't intend to alter my arrangements a particle, on his, or any one else's account!

JOHN.—Mabel, you are enough to provoke a saint, I declare!

MABEL (*roguishly*).—Do you consider yourself a fair specimen of the "stuff that saints are made of" uncle John? If so my ideas of those worthies will take a less exalted turn!

JOHN.—Hold your tongue, you saucy minx, before I forget that you are out of short dresses, and box your ears soundly! Was ever a poor man so afflicted as I am.

MABEL.—In that case the prospect of getting rid of the "*affliction*" for a number of months ought to be a subject of profound congratulation to you, uncle John! It shall be my especial object, to spare you the wear and tear of my perversity for as long a time as possible.

JOHN.—What has got into that girl all of a sudden? Until now she has been a demure, shy little thing, apparently a stranger to anything like remonstrance, and now she blossoms out into a full fledged bird, with her wings all spread and ready for flight.

MABEL (*laughing*).—It is only the free independent spirit of an American citizen manifesting itself, uncle John! "Taxation without representation is tyranny;" and where my services are taxed, there I mean to have my rights and wishes represented; so you can play John Bull, and I'll be a sort of *Sister* Jonathan, and rebel; which I intend to do forthwith! Does that enlighten you any?

JOHN.—Well I move that we quit this sparring, for we only come around to the same spot, without making any progress. Get your traps together. and I'll order Dan to have the carriage ready in time. I suppose I can manage to exist until you come back. [*Exit* UNCLE JOHN.

MABEL.—So much for the first installment of petticoat government; it works finely already! Now to notify aunt Mary, that I'm coming, and then for the accomplishment of my project. We'll see who is the smartest, uncle John! you with your fifty-five years of incorrigible bachelordom, or your niece with her eighteen summers. [*Exit* MABEL.

SCENE II.—*Same as first.*

Enter MABEL *equipped for travelling; with* UNCLE JOHN.

MABEL.—Goodbye, uncle John! has Dan got everything on the carriage? two trunks, three bandboxes, and a little hand-satchel—that was all, I believe.

JOHN.—Yes! they're all in; I saw to them myself; though what women want with such a mountain of baggage is more than I can see! One would think you were going to Europe, or some out of the way, desert place where you never expected to get anything more to wear for the rest of your natural life!

MABEL.—In the event of the latter place being my destination I think I should dispense with luggage altogether! but you need'nt try to cast any slurs upon the place of my proposed visit! If aunt Mary's house is small and in the country, it's a perfect little bird's nest for comfort and coziness. and I know I shall have a delightful time.

JOHN.—Humph! hope you may, I'm sure! And is all remem-

brance of my existence to be utterly ignored, during your sojourn abroad, may I ask?

MABEL.—Not quite, uncle John! although you have treated me so cruelly, I'll think enough of your comfort to send you a letter once in a while!

JOHN.—Much obliged! I don't know that it will add to my comfort very materially, but I want to be able to keep some track of you, so as to know whether you get into any mischief or not, or run up any extravagant bills for me to settle.

MABEL.—Crusty to the last, eh? Now you see if you would only have consented to be a little considerate and have let Harry and me be happy in our own way all this might have been prevented.

JOHN.—Don't mention that young rascal's name in my hearing again. If it hadn't been for him, there would have been none of this trouble. But that's just the way it is; once let a girl contract a foolish notion for a fellow, and the more good for nothing he is, the more pertinaciously she'll hold on to him. Thank fortune I never got married!

MABEL.—Perhaps there may be some female enjoying the content and freedom of single blessedness who can reciprocate your congratulation, uncle John! I'm sure I wouldn't be your wife for a kingdom! But I mustn't stand here talking or I may lose the train. Once more, good-bye uncle John.

JOHN (*kissing her*).—Good-bye, you foolish, wilful girl! I expect nothing else than that you'll be homesick in a week's time, and be glad enough to come home again.

MABEL.—Don't be too sure uncle John! Look out that *you* are not the first one to want matters restored to their old condition. I hope you will have as good a time as I shall,—that's all.

JOHN.—I don't see how I'm going to manage about the meals and so on, that's a fact!

MABEL.—Why, do as other people would under similar emergencies; advertise for a housekeeper, and take your meals at a restaurant until she comes. But I mustn't stay another minute; don't trouble yourself to come out, Dan can help me into the carriage; and look out for a letter from me about the middle of next week. And as I don't intend to exile myself permanently from

you, I'll not say "good-bye" but "au revoir.' [*Exit* MABEL.

JOHN (*throwing himself into a chair*).—There she goes! and I may as well give up the idea of *living* any longer; for I don't believe there's another individual on the face of the earth, that can take charge of and superintend household matters like she can, to suit *me,* at all events! Confound the perverse little minx! why couldn't she settle down with George, as I wish her to, instead of taking herself off in this defiant fashion, and putting me to all this trouble! Oh dear! dear! what it is to be a guardian! But there is no use in wasting time in lamentations, I suppose; I'll have to advertise, as she suggested, and I may as well set about it first as last; and then instead of having my Mabel's bright face looking at me across the table, no doubt I'll have a fussy old woman, whose only recreation will be her snuff-box, and counting her wrinkles every morning! Oh confound it all! what a pickle I have got myself into, to be sure!

[*Exit* UNCLE JOHN.

SCENE III.—*Same as before; a door R.*

Enter UNCLE JOHN.

JOHN.—Well! here's three days, and three advertisements in the newspaper, and no sign of that necessary evil yet. I've slept in pretty nearly every bed in the house, gone twice in a pouring shower to get my meals, and no nearer prospect of a change for the better than at the first, that I can see. This is a delightful state of domestic affairs for a man of my age, I must confess! It almost makes me wish I *had* got married, after all; for I could at least have had sufficient authority over my wife to keep her from flying all over the country, and leaving me to starve. (*A knock at the door.*) There! who's that! the housekeeper, I suppose! Confound the whole kit and bang of them! But I suppose I must go and see what he or she wants! (*Opens door.*)

Enter MRS. WIGGINS, *in a cloak, and with her green spectacles; closes the door after her.*

MRS. WIGGINS.—Is this Mr. John Raynor's house?

JOHN.—Yes ma'am!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well, you'll see the coachman waiting outside! Just pay him his charges, quick, and get some one to bring in my trunks.

JOHN (*aside*).—Fire and furies! (*aloud*). But madam, I—

MRS. WIGGINS.—Don't Madam me! my name is Mrs. Wiggins; and it isn't likely I'd come all the way from Snipetown at this dreadful season of the year, only to be sent back again! You advertised for a housekeeper, and I'm a housekeeper; and you said you wanted one for about six months, so I've come calculating to stay six months; and if you ain't suited at the end of that time, you can get somebody else! So just pay the man, for he's in a hurry, and let me know which room's mine, and I'll get to work right away.

JOHN.—Well I declare! here's petticoat government with a vengeance. I suppose there's no way left for me but to submit.

[*Exit* UNCLE JOHN.

MRS. WIGGINS.—I rather guess it is petticoat government, my good sir, and of a most uncompromising kind I can tell you, so you'll find out by the time I've been in the house a few weeks! I must settle the question of wages when he comes back, for I don't mean to give my time and talents for nothing!

Enter UNCLE JOHN.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well, did you pay the coachman?

JOHN.—Yes, I did; and a confoundedly exorbitant price, too! That wasn't included in the advertisement that I am aware of!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Wasn't, hey? who ever heard of a lady paying her own carriage hire? I hope you ain't a miser, Mr. Raynor?

JOHN.—Humph! precious little chance of my being a miser, with such a lot of extravagant characters as I manage to draw around me! there's far more prospect of my dying in the poor house, at the rate matters are going on now.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Because I knew a miser once, and he was so stingy that he wouldn't hire a servant, and his house was broken into one night and—

JOHN.—If you please, Mrs. Wiggins, I'll defer hearing the rest of that story until another time, as it's getting late and nearly

time for supper. You'll find your room on the first landing, the third door on the left.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Look-a-here, Mr. Raynor! don't you be in quite such a hurry; there's one or two matters have got to be settled yet. What time do you eat breakfast in the morning?

JOHN.—Oh any time between seven and nine will suit me—as well as I *can* be suited—confound it.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well it won't suit *me*, at all! I'm not used to any such lazy habits! I'm up every day of my life at five o'clock, and always as hungry as a bear in the morning! So breakfast will be ready at six o'clock, and if you ain't down to eat it, you'll have to wait until dinner time.

JOHN.—Thunderation! that's what you call being master in one's own house, eh? I always take my second nap after six o'clock.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well! those are my rules, and I can't alter them to suit individual cases; and I've always given perfect satisfaction. So I'll ring the bell at—

JOHN.—Oh ring the bell in the middle of the night, if you see fit to, by all means! I'll have to get up, dead or alive, I suppose! This is one of the blessings of having a stranger around; I needn't expect a particle of consideration!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Where I came from, Mr. Raynor, they used to tell me it was mighty onpolite to take a body up that way! Howsumever, bachelors h'aint got no idea of how to behave themselves! And now one thing more, how much wages do you calculate to pay me!

JOHN.—Oh for goodness sake! charge anything you like and I'll foot the bill! only do leave me a little peace and go and see about my supper! (*aside*). When I let that niece of mine slip through my fingers again, I guess I'll know it.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well, I'll leave you to get into a better temper, and go and see to things; but just remember that I want my wages in advance.

JOHN.—Anyway you please, so that I'm left undisturbed.

[*Exit* MRS. WIGGINS.

So that's to be Mabel's substitute for the next six months! a charming substitute upon my word! However, perhaps her cap-

ability as a housekeeper will offset her objectionable qualities; and I can stuff cotton into my ears to keep out the noise of her tongue! [*Exit* UNCLE JOHN.

SCENE IV.—*Breakfast-room.* UNCLE JOHN *pacing up and down.*

JOHN.—This is more than mortal flesh and blood can stand! Not a decent meal have I sat down to since that headstrong niece of mine took herself out of the house three weeks ago! Three weeks! the only wonder is how I have survived it all! and the house is so confoundedly lonely without her too, that I've half a mind to hang myself! What has been my bill of fare every—well I don't want to swear, so I'll say, *blessed*—morning since that—house *destroyer* she had best be called—came under my roof? Nothing but cold muffins, underdone eggs and miserable muddy coffee; and when I venture to utter a word of remonstrance, or suggest that things might be better, she sets up such a din about my ears, that I'm only too glad to swallow my breakfast as it is, and get out of the room away from the noise. Petticoat government under my pretty, tasteful Mabel's *regime*, was a very pleasant experience, but when transferred to the gorgon, who sits opposite me at the table, with her horrid false teeth and curls, and glares at me through those abominable green spectacles of hers, that I've more than once been tempted to send flying into the middle of next week—its only another name for Purgatory. Here she comes, *bless* her! Speak of—

Enter MRS. WIGGINS.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Good morning sir! waiting for your breakfast?

JOHN.—Yes! (*aside*). *Breakfast*, indeed! haven't enjoyed such a luxury since Mabel went away! All the money I've paid this creature might just as well have been pitched into the street. I declare I'll write to Mabel this afternoon and beg her to come home. Let's see what the wilful minx says!—(*Pulls letter from his pocket.*)

MRS. WIGGINS.—Your breakfast is ready, Mr. Raynor! you'd better come before the coffee gets cold!

JOHN.—*Coffee* forsooth! I wonder whether if it could speak it would answer to that name! I would'nt give much for its

veracity if it did! (*seats himself at table*)—humph! watery potatoes, and toast burnt to a cinder, as usual!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Mr. Raynor, I have received diplomas from three first class hotels, endorsing my skill, and I've got 'em this blessed minute in my trunk up stairs; and I won't hear any aspersions upon my working! I'd have you to understand, sir—

JOHN.—I beg that the subject may be waived to another occasion, madam! I wish to read this letter from my niece!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Some more of your horrid bachelor manners! Reading at the table, especially when there's others present was considered, where *I* came from, very—

JOHN (*aside*).—I wish to goodness you'd staid where you came from!—(*aloud*)—Madam, you'll oblige me by postponing this subject indefinitely. I wish to see what my niece says. (*reads partly aloud*) "Dear uncle; Aunt Mary sends her love to you. I'm having a splendid time, and think I shall stay all winter"—(*throwing the letter down, speaks*). Confound her! let her stay then! she'll get back in time for my funeral, perhaps! I know one thing! every cent I have shall go to George Wilson!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Gracious fathers! what an awful boy you must ha' been!

JOHN (*angrily*).—What do you mean by that, madam?

MRS. WIGGINS.—Why, you've got such a shocking temper! Just look at the way you slammed that letter down on the floor; and you've spilled your coffee all over my clean table cloth! Where *I* came from—

JOHN.—Where you came from, I dare say, they were all saints; but I don't make any pretentions of that sort! Good gracious sakes alive, Mrs. Wiggins! ain't I enough of a master in my own house, that's bought and paid for and furnished and provided for with my own money, to be allowed the privilege of expressing myself when matters don't suit me!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Dear me! how red you do get in the face! that's always a sure sign of a shocking disposition! and you might as well speak Choctaw when you get going so fast, for all that a body can understand! But as for being left to growl at everything, as you've been a doin' for the last two weeks, it depends upon the kind of a person you have to see after things. If she's

one of these soft timid sort, I suppose she'd let you grumble all you please—but when you've got a person of character like me, to deal with you'll find—

JOHN.—I'll tell you what *you'll* find, madam! that I'll get rid of you and your intolerable lectures as soon as possible. Fire and furies! I hav'nt dared to say my soul was my own, or drawn a breath in peace since you've been in the house! But I'll have a change of programme in short metre. I've endured this kind of thing long enough, the house is going to wreck and ruin, and Mabel shall come home and have her own way. Yes, I'll have the girl back if I have to see her married to a dozen Harry Ashfords!

MRS. WIGGINS.—A dozen! sakes alive! why that would be bigamy would'nt it? I always heern tell so, anyhow!

JOHN.—Confound my stupid way of speaking aloud, just when I don't want to. I'll write to Mabel anyhow and tell her if she'll only come back she shall do as she pleases, and that if she don't, I'll commit suicide!

MRS. WIGGINS.—This here Mabel is your niece, is'nt she?

JOHN.—Yes! I suppose I've let that out with the rest of the family secrets!

MRS. WIGGINS.—What made her leave ye?

JOHN.—Because I would'nt let her marry a confounded scamp of a fellow!—(*aside*)—there! I did'nt mean to say that, plague on my unfortunate tongue! I could bite it off!

MRS. WIGGINS.—And yet you're willing now to let her marry a dozen of 'em! 'Pears to me you're mighty consistent!

JOHN.—Because I've had such a miserable experience, that I'm bound to have the girl back at any price!

MRS. WIGGINS.—And why would'nt you let her marry the young feller in the first place.

JOHN.—Because I wanted her to marry my nephew, and she would'nt look at him!

MRS. WIGGINS.—You acknowledge that she was such a treasure, and that you've been miserable without her, and yet you were not willing to give her the privilege of choosing her own husband. I want to know if you call *that* fair!

JOHN.—Well it don't exactly look square, that's a fact. But I don't see why she could'nt have taken to George and pleased me!

MRS. WIGGINS.—I don't see why you can't be satisfied with *my* housekeeping! It suits me well enough, and I've always been considered a first-rate hand at cooking.

JOHN.—Perhaps your capabilities might suit some individuals—Fegee Islanders for instance; but every one to his taste, you know.

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well! I want to hear some more about this thing? Was there any reason why your niece shouldn't have married the young fellow that she had a liking for?

JOHN.—Yes, plenty of reasons—

MRS. WIGGINS (*interupting*).—What were they? was he poor?

JOHN.—No the scamp had money enough; but—

MRS. WIGGINS.—Did he gamble?

JOHN.—No; but then—

MRS. WIGGINS.—Or get drunk—

JOHN.—No; however—

MRS. WIGGINS.—Or chew tobacco?

JOHN.—No; but ?

MRS. WIGGINS.—Or steal any?—

JOHN.—No! no! confound you, woman, do let one have a chance to get a word in edgewise!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well I don't see what you had agin him, then! I've gone over pretty nearly all the sins in the calendar that I know of!

JOHN.—If you'll only give that irrepressible tongue of yours a moment's rest, I can tell you. I wanted her to marry somebody *else*, that's the reason; isn't that enough?

MRS. WIGGINS.—I should think it was—more than enough! You're a pretty specimen of generosity aren't you? expecting the poor girl to work and slave herself for you, and then make her marry somebody she don't care a rush for, as a proof of your regard for her services. I just think you've treated that niece of yours shamefully, Mr. John Raynor!

JOHN.—Well I begin to think so myself, by gracious. I *was* a selfish brute!

MRS. WIGGINS.—I don't wonder she left ye; I'd a done it, too!

JOHN. (*aside*).—I only wish you'd do it now! I shall be worn to skin and bone if this goes on much longer!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Well its one good sign that you're willing to

own up that you was wrong. Now what would you give to have your niece back again? She must have been mighty good looking if that's a picture of her over the mantlepiece.

JOHN.—She was as pretty as a picture, and the sunshine of the house! and I'd give anything to have her back again!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Would you let her choose her own husband, and give her a nice portion, and promise not to be so cross or unreasonable again?

JOHN.—Yes, yes, a thousand times yes!

MRS. WIGGINS. (*springing up and embracing him*).—Oh! you *dear* old darling!

John (*drawing back aghast*).—Why—why—what does this mean? This certainly is a most remarkable proceeding! Explain yourself, madame, explain yourself!

MRS. WIGGINS.—Certainly (*diverting herself of her disguise*), there uncle John! is that anything of a improvement?

JOHN (*catching her in his arms*).—Oh you good for nothing little witch! What shall I ever do with you, for playing such a naughty trick on me?

HARRY (*entering*).—Bestow her on me, dear uncle John! Come, you will not refuse us your blessing! (*They kneel before him.*)

JOHN.—Nor will I, lest my Mabel should be transformed again and vanish permanently. Bless you, my children; you shall have her at the earliest opportunity, Harry; only let her go and take off that odious dress, and array herself in one of her own fairy like fabrics. [*Exit* MABEL.

HARRY.—I've been living in Purgatory for the last three weeks! I wouldn't go through it again for all I'm worth!

Enter MABEL.

Now come here you little witch, and give a strict account of yourself, while I make up my mind as to whether I can forgive you or not!

MABEL (*laughing*).—I charge you to render a favorable decision, uncle John, under penalty of my resolving hopelessly into Mrs. Wiggins. And now I will unravel the mystery. I did indeed go to aunt Mary's, made known to her my plan, borrowed my disguise

and came here. And the rest, you can relate as well as I, ha! ha! ha! although I'm sorry you were so unappreciative of my efforts to please your palate!

JOHN.—Your efforts, indeed, you sly minx! I could shake you for a week; when I think of all the impertinence I had to take from you!

HARRY.—She was only giving you a sample of the delights of petticoat government, uncle John.

JOHN.—Delights that I don't care to experience again. But I don't see how you managed about the letters.

MABEL.—Why I sent them to aunt Mary, and she sent them to you! The longest way round is the shortest way there, you know!

JOHN.—To all of which tricks I am indebted to your boarding-school days, I suppose. I dare say you were shaking in your shoes the whole time for fear of being discovered. But the fact was I was so busy thinking about you, and was so confoundedly sorry that I had let you go, that I never dreamed of any such caper, and hardly looked at you in fact, or I might have found you out. But you've proved too much for me—as is always the case with women—and I'll only stipulate that you and Harry will make this your home after you are married.

HARRY (*laughing*).—So you're ready to acknowledge the supremacy of petticoat government, uncle John, over us masculines, and all our projects and authority.

JOHN.—Oh mercy, yes! one woman is equal to half a dozen men in the way of stratagem. But since it has all ended so happily I don't know that I have cause for complaint.

MABEL.—And you shall have your slippers for a Christmas present after all, uncle John, as a reward for your good behavior.

HARRY.—And this day three months, I invite all who have an interest in our fortunes, to witness a ceremony in which another of the 'lords of creation' will bow his neck to the pleasant yoke of PETTICOAT GOVERNMENT!

CURTAIN.

NOW OR NEVER;

OR,

"DELAYS ARE DANGEROUS."

By Ellen Pickering.

(*See note to Dialogue entitled "THE UNCLE," page* 28).

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Johnson.	Rattle.
Miss Johnson.	Doleful.

Miss Johnson.—What, brother, not gone yet? I thought you were to meet the commissioners at twelve.

Johnson.—Well, it has not struck yet.

Miss Johnson.—But it will in a minute, and you are not dressed yet.

Johnson (*yawning*).—Plenty of time. People never meet as soon as they say.

Miss Johnson.—There is no time to be lost; there is the clock striking now, and it is a good half-hour's walk to the board.

Johnson (*deliberately folding the newspaper and stretching out his legs*).—I can get a cab.

Miss Johnson.—There were none on the stand as I passed just now.

Johnson.—There will be presently.

Miss Johnson.—I doubt it; there is a picnic in the woods, and there is scarcely a cab in the town.

Johnson.—Then I must wait till they come back.

Miss Johnson.—There is not time to wait: the commissioners were to meet precisely at twelve.

Johnson.—Precisely! people always say precisely, but they never meet for an hour after.

MISS JOHNSON.—I saw the commissioners going toward the board as I came home.

JOHNSON.—Only some of them, I daresay; there is plenty of time.

MISS JOHNSON.—There is no such thing, brother. How can you be such a dawdle? The commissioners are sitting now, you will lose all your valuable rights, if you do not appear to support them.

JOHNSON.—No, no, I sha'n't; I daresay they will wait for me.

MISS JOHNSON.—Wait for you! That is just what you always say. As if public commissioners can wait for every one. You are as bad as a child, expecting a bird to wait to have salt put on its tail. Do pray put on your coat, and set off directly.

JOHNSON.—Do not be in such a hurry, Jane; you never leave me a moment's quiet: hurry here—hurry there—hurry everywhere.

MISS JOHNSON.—I never knew you hurry anywhere.

JOHNSON.—Well, why should I? Hurry did not win the race—the tortoise beat the hare.

MISS JOHNSON.—Because the hare waited.

JOHNSON.—Well, well; the people wait for me.

MISS JOHNSON.—Did the train wait for you when you were summoned to your dying uncle? Did that same uncle wait your arrival before he made his will? Did not he refuse to wait any longer, and thinking your absence a want of respect, leave all he had to my cousin?

JOHNSON.—I don't see why they should be so very particular on the railroads. A few minutes could not matter: with their speed they could soon dash on and make it up again.

MISS JOHNSON.—And dash into the train before them. They will never make you a railway director, I trust.

JOHNSON.—If all the trains waited a few minutes it would be just the same. I doubt if railroads do much good.

MISS JOHNSON.—They may teach people to be punctual, which will be a great good. But you have not put on your coat, now.

JOHNSON.—I will in a minute, Jane; don't be so impatient. I am only just waiting to finish this article.

MISS JOHNSON.—Just waiting! Those two words have been your bane through life: you waited till Miss Banbury, young, rich

and pretty, married your rival. You waited till the situation that had been offered you was given to another. You waited to insure your home till it was burnt down. To descend to minor things, you never make up your mind to buy a horse till some one else has purchased it. You never sit down to dinner till the fish is cold and the soup taken away.

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune."

But you never attempt to take the tide till it has ebbed; and then you are left floundering in the mud, instead of being borne into port on the top of the wave. Will you never learn that nothing in this world waits but Peter Johnson? Now, do put down the paper, brother.

JOHNSON.—Well, well, there, I am putting it down, only let me lay it smooth.

MISS JOHNSON.—There, go and put your coat on.

JOHNSON.—Wait a moment, I hear some one coming; perhaps it is to say that the commissioners won't meet to-day, but wait till to-morrow.

MISS JOHNSON.—Much more likely to say that they won't wait any longer for you. As I said before, nothing and no one waits now but Peter Johnson; and why should he be an exception to the general rule?

Enter RATTLE.

RATTLE.—I am glad you are here, for my uncle has sent me on business of great importance, and we were afraid you might be one to the board of commissioners.

JOHNSON (*turning in triumph to his sister*).—There! you see what good comes of waiting.

MISS JOHNSON.—Time will show.

RATTLE.—Mr. Winslow has sent my uncle directions to sell Barton's farm immediately, and Dobson has just offered ten thousand dollars for it, and is to call for an answer in ten minutes. He declares he will give no more, so if you will advance upon this it shall be yours, only you must decide directly. Yes or no.

JOHNSON.—Stop, don't be in such a hurry; just wait whilst I think a little.

RATTLE.—I cannot wait a minute, my dear sir: there are two sets of marriage settlements to be finished to-night. Lovers won't wait—no one waits, except waiters at an inn, and they don't wait for nothing.

JOHNSON.—Bless me, every one goes at railroad speed, and won't wait a minute. Barton's farm? Ay, that is the farm just before my windows, that I have been waiting for so long. A bad neighbor might make it very unpleasant.

RATTLE (*who has been fidgeting about first on one foot and then on the other*).—Exactly so; and Dobson intends to erect a manufactory there with gas works, etc., which will spoil your place, and lessen its value full one-half. You should not hesitate a moment, sir. Yes or no?

JOHNSON.—Wait a moment.

RATTLE.—I can't wait an instant; time goes on, whilst we are stopping. Yes or no?

JOHNSON.—Yes—no—yes. I must wait a minute to think. Tell your uncle I will call upon him, and let him know my decision.

RATTLE.—Very well, sir; only remember Dobson will be back in five minutes now, and must have an answer.

JOHNSON.—Tell your uncle to wait till I come.

RATTLE (*as he is hurrying off*).—Can't wait, sir; Time and Timson never wait. (*Aside.*) Old fogrum! who is to wait for him, I wonder. The stand-still party is in the minority now. Go-a-head is the word; and spades are trumps. [*Exit* RATTLE.

JOHNSON.—Gone! won't wait a minute. This is the helter-skelter age. If my respected grandfather could step out of his grave, I wonder what he would say to it.

MISS JOHNSON.—Leave your respected grandfather quiet in his tomb, and go to Timson directly, and say you will give ten thousand and one hundred dollars for Barton's farm, and then hurry on to the commissioners and enforce your rights.

JOHNSON.—Plenty of time. Timson's is only three doors off. No need of hurry.

MISS JOHNSON.—Yes, there is. The five minutes are nearly up already, and you are still in your dressing-gown and slippers.

JOHNSON.—Oh! I can put on my coat in a minute.

MISS JOHNSON.—Then pray do it at once, or Dobson will be there before you.

JOHNSON.—Oh! Timson will wait for me.

MISS JOHNSON.—His nephew said he could not; Dobson must have an answer.

JOHNSON.—Well, I will only just wait to make out the value of the farm. (*Takes up a pen, which his sister snatches away.*)

MISS JOHNSON.—There is no time for that now: anything rather than have a manufactory and gasometer just before your face.

JOHNSON.—Ah! so it is. Then I will go directly; only just let me get my snuff-box.

MISS JOHNSON.—Never mind your snuff-box. Here is your coat. (*His sister snatches his coat from a chair and assists him to put it on.*)

JOHNSON.—Wait a minute. I think I had better put on the other coat.

MISS JOHNSON.—No, no, any coat will do; the five minutes are up now; you will certainly be too late.

JOHNSON.—That is the wrong arm-hole. "The more haste the worse speed." (*The coat is put on after some difficulty.*) But where are my shoes?

MISS JOHNSON.—Never mind your shoes. Go in your slippers to Timson's, and I will send your shoes after you, and bid John run for a cab. There now, go. (*Pushes him towards the door.*)

JOHNSON.—Stop a minute, here is some one coming. Timson will certainly wait for me.

Enter DOLEFUL.

DOLEFUL.—I am truly grieved to be the bearer of mournful intelligence; it always seems to be my unhappy fate to afflict my friends.

MISS JOHNSON.—Some other time, Mr. Doleful, my brother is in haste just now.

JOHNSON.—Oh! I will just wait and hear. What is it, Doleful?

DOLEFUL.—Why, not being at the Board to explain and enforce your claims, and Sneerwell speaking strongly against them, they are disallowed; and you lose all your rights.

JOHNSON.—Lose all my rights! A full five thousand dollars a

year gone. This is downright cheating. Why did not the commissioners await my arrival?

DOLEFUL.—Your name chanced to be called first—it was proved that the notice had been served upon you, and so the commissioners decided at once; they boast of being like Time, and never waiting for any one.

JOHNSON.—There now, just as I was on my way to the commissioners. I must consider what is to be done: every one is in such a hurry.

MISS JOHNSON.—Then do you be in a hurry too, and run off to Timson.

JOHNSON.—Well, I suppose I had better; but here comes Rattle out of breath, as usual. How people do hurry themselves.

Enter RATTLE.

RATTLE.—My uncle wants to know whether you wish to buy any railway shares?

JOHNSON.—No; I hate railways—they never wait for any one. But I am just going to your uncle to say I will buy Barton's farm.

RATTLE.—Very sorry, sir; but you are too late. Dobson has paid the deposit money.

JOHNSON (*in dismay*).—Too late! I told you to wait till I came.

RATTLE.—I told you we could not wait, sir. However, my uncle did wait three minutes; but you did not come, and Dobson grew so impatient, that he could not wait any longer. Of course, he thought you did not care about it.

JOHNSON.—But I did care about it a great deal. Lose five thousand a year, and have a manufactory and a gasometer run up just under my nose, and all at once! A pretty day's work! But that has been ever the way from my birth. Some one always steps in just before me, people are in such a hurry.

MISS JOHNSTON.—Rather say you are so slow, and always a day too late for the fair. You are simply exasperating. Oh! if you would only keep the good old proverb in mind for the future!

[*Exeunt.*

CURTAIN.

A CLOSE SHAVE.

By Bob. O'Link.

CHARACTERS.

John Marsh, *a bachelor.*
Tony, *his valet.*

Costumes.—Marsh, Pajama suit, cotton night cap, slippers. Tony, Trousers, short white jacket, slippers.

SCENE.—*A bachelor's bed-room. Door, right. In centre, back, a bed screened by curtains parting in the middle. Left, a toilet-table. Right, a small table, chair, shaving materials, etc.*

As the Curtain rises, a clock strikes ten.

Marsh (*in bed, with a cotton night-cap on, thrusts his head out between the curtains*).—I wonder what hour the clock struck just now. Where's that rascal? (*Calls.*) Tony! Tony!!

Tony (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (*calls*).—What time is it?

Tony (*outside*).—Don't know!

Marsh (*calls*).—Go and see, you numbskull!

Tony (*outside, yawns*).—I'm in bed.

Marsh (*calls*).—Get up! Quick, now!

Tony (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (*speaks*).—That's the laziest fellow I ever saw. I make him sleep in the next room so as to be within call. Without exception he is about the sleepiest fellow I ever met, and as stupid as a donkey, but with all his clumsiness he is faithful and puts up with all my impatience and, sometimes, ill temper. (*Pause.*) What can he be about? (*Calls.*) Tony!!

Tony (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (*calls*).—Do you want me to come and shake you up? What time is it?

TONY (*outside*).—Ten o'clock.

MARSH (*speaks*).—Ten! Great Cæsar! I am to be married at eleven, and my best man is to be here at half past ten. (*Calls.*) Tony!

TONY (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

MARSH (*calls angrily*).—Why didn't you call me an hour ago?

TONY (*outside*).—Had no orders!

MARSH (*calls*).—Didn't you know I was to be married this morning?

TONY (*outside*).—Never told me so!

MARSH (*calls*).—Never told you! Didn't you know it?

TONY (*outside*).—Never know nothing but what I'm told.

MARSH (*calls*).—Well, you confounded fool, I tell you now! Do you hear me?

TONY (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

MARSH (*calls impatiently*).—Quick, now! Bring in my clothes and shoes. Hurry,—come and help me dress. (*Gets out of bed.*)

TONY (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir.

MARSH (*speaks excitedly*).—Oh, if I only had time, I'd trounce you, my fine fellow. Ah! I must shave, I'd better begin at once—no hot water—no matter—(*lathers his face*). The idea of sleeping so late on one's wedding day! I wonder what Anna Maria would say? Anna Maria (*musingly*),—nice girl, tall, rather dark, but then—richest heiress in Podunk—so her father says. Met her at Rockaway—wild waves—beach by moonlight—spoons for two—the old story.—Oh!—soap in my eye! How it smarts! (*calls.*) Tony!

TONY (*outside*).—Aye, aye, sir!

MARSH (*calls*).—Aye, aye! Come here, you scamp, and wipe my eye!

TONY (*outside*).—Can't do it. I'm brushing your coat.

MARSH (*speaks, excitedly*).—Oh, if I only had time! I'd brush you!

Enter TONY.

TONY.—Here I am!

MARSH.—What's the matter now?

TONY.—I've come to wipe your eye.

MARSH (*excited*).—Oh! If I only had time! Turn round, you villain!

TONY.—Aye, aye, sir. (*Turns his back to* MARSH, *who gives him a kick.*) Ah! (*laughs*) Ain't he quaint!

MARSH.—Off with you! fetch my clothes. [*Exit* TONY.

Yes, she's a daisy. Her father promised me a splendid four-story house in Podunk as a wedding present. Luckily, I have a friend there, a lawyer, to whom I wrote, asking him to find out and tell me all about her,—and the house, of course.—I've had no answer yet, but I suppose it's all right. The old man was a really nice, good-natured fellow. He was so particular in asking me all about myself, my means and prospects. He said that Anna Maria was so sensitive, so amiable, and had received many offers, but had never appeared to be favorably impressed by any of her suitors until now. There was almost a tear in his eye when he thought of having to part with her, but her happiness was his whole object in life. I assured him that I would do all in my power to make her life a happy one. And yet, I wish I had news from Podunk.

Enter TONY.

TONY.—Here I am.

MARSH.—What have you got now?

TONY.—Your hat and cane—

MARSH.—Blockhead! Do you suppose I need to be married with a cane? Oh! If I only had time! Turn round!

TONY.—Aye, aye, sir! (*Turns round.*

MARSH (*kicks him*).—There! Now fetch my clothes.

TONY (*aside*).—Ah! (*laughs*) Ain't he quaint! (*starts toward door, returns*). Oh, I forgot—here's a letter for you.

MARSH (*impatient*).—Put it on the table, and fetch my razor—hurry, now.

TONY.—Which razor? The white handle, or the black handle—or, perhaps—

MARSH (*enraged*).—Any razor, you dolt! Off with you.

Exit TONY; *re-enters in a hurry.*

TONY.—Here's your razor.

MARSH (*commencing to shave*).—Say, Tony, are you going to keep that jacket on you all day?

TONY.—No—Sir! I'm going to take it off—soon going to bed again—

MARSH (*starts; cuts his face*).—Back to bed? Oh! I've cut myself!

TONY.—That's nothing, let it bleed.

MARSH.—Be off with you, put on your new livery. You'll have to ride on the box with the driver. It will look well, you know.

TONY.—But, sir—

MARSH.—I'll give you ten minutes to change your clothes. Now—fly, or I'll massacre you. [*Exit* TONY.

It's dreadful to have to hurry so; confound it! There's another gash! How it bleeds! Hang the razor (*dashes it on the floor*). Now I'll have to wait till these gashes stop bleeding (*sits down*).

Enter TONY.

TONY.—Here's your clothes—

MARSH.—Put them on that chair, and—

TONY.—You seem in a desperate hurry to get married.

MARSH.—Hurry, indeed! and people waiting for me.

TONY.—I got married once.

MARSH.—You? Well, I declare!

TONY.—Yes. But it was a failure—an awful fizzle (*sits down*). Oh, a distressing story. You see, I married a girl from 'way down Alabama. Sweet as a ripe orange, and about the same complexion. Oh, she was a bloomer!

MARSH.—Orange—and a bloomer—a complete wedding wreath, ready made. Did she fade? What separated you?

TONY.—Only a little difference of taste and opinion.

MARSH.—That seems rather a slender excuse for such an important step as separation between man and wife.

TONY.—Slender! not so slender as you think. Do you chew tobacco?

MARSH.—I? Well, occasionally.

TONY.—Occasionally? This is about the first time I've seen you without it in your mouth. Well, now—suppose your future bride had an abhorrence of tobacco, and asked you to give up the nasty habit.

MARSH.—I think I would, without hesitation. She certainly would think I had very little love for her if I didn't.

TONY.—That was about the trouble with us.

MARSH.—What? Did you chew tobacco, and refused to quit it?

TONY.—Not much! The shoe was on the other foot.

MARSH.—You don't say! What! she—chewed?

TONY.—She ate garlic,—was dreadfully fond of it. I can't bear the horrible stuff. The third day after our wedding, I said, Seraphina Maria—shut down on the garlic. Choose for yourself,—Anthony and bliss, or Garlic and divorce.—She chose the garlic, and that ended it. Say! does the future Mrs. Marsh like garlic?

MARSH.—You impudent beggar! Get out of this! Be off and dress yourself. Oh! If I only had time! Here! Turn around.

TONY.—Aye, aye, sir (*turns his back to* MARSH *who kicks him*). Holy smoke! (*aside*) Ain't he quaint! [*Exit* TONY.

MARSH.—Gracious! These gashes will never stop bleeding. Oh! the letter! I forgot all about it. (*Takes letter, opens and reads.*) "My dear Marsh"—(*speaks*) from the Podunk lawyer; just in time; let's see what he says. (*Reads.*) "I hasten to reply to your inquiries about the young lady, and the house you mention." (*Speaks.*) I had no idea that I was a nervous man, but at this crisis, this turning-point in my life, I actually tremble at the perusal of words that may seal my fate irrevocably. Be still, my heart! Now for the report from Podunk. My sight grows dim, but courage! (*Reads.*) "The house is not a four-story one by any means; who ever said so added, not only *one*, but *three* stories to its real dimensions. It boasts of just *one*, in fact, a shanty, and in the last stages ot delapidation." (*Speaks.*) Jerusalem! (*reads.*) "The young lady in question is by no means deficient in stories of another and rather unsavory kind. She was very popular,—in fact, quite a general pet,—with the officers of the 99th cavalry when that regiment was stationed here"—(*speaks excitedly*). Too many stories to the woman, and too few to the house! A pretty story, altogether, upon my word. The house, a shanty, a delapidated shanty. The house which had raised up visions of future ease and comfort, and rent-free wedded bliss, a myth! What a liar the old man must be! There must be some mistake, and yet, my friend is very explicit. Yes, I *must* believe it. And Anna Maria, so sweet—so gentle—can it be? Oh! What a fool I must have

been to pick up a girl on the beach and be so completely bamboozled by a flirting schemer! Sold! Ignominiously sold! What a lucky escape. (*calls*) Tony!!

Enter TONY.

TONY.—Here I am!

MARSH.—Pick up that razor! (TONY *does so.*) Now—kiss it! (TONY, *astonished, does so.*) Kiss it again. Good! Hand it to me.

TONY (*hands it*).—There! (*aside*) Oh! ain't he quaint.

MARSH (*takes it*).—Blessed razor! But for thee, I should have been sacrificed, betrayed, swindled! As thou hast cut me, so cut I the mendacious Seraphina. (*To* TONY.) Hand me that night-cap!

TONY.—Ha! Ha! Going to get married in a night-cap.

MARSH.—Hush up, you blockhead. I'm going to bed again. Be off! Never mind your livery and—

TONY.—I'm off to bed—hurrah!

MARSH.—And, mind you,! If anyone knocks or rings, let them knock. If you open the door to a living soul to-day, I'll kill you. Turn around (TONY *turns*, MARSH *kicks him*). There. Now be off—

TONY.—Thunder! That was a corker! (*aside*). Oh! Ain't he quaint! [*Exit.*

MARSH.—Now for bed, and peace and quiet. Thus ends my dream of love and matrimony! The beautiful house in Podunk melts from my view like a phantom castle in the air. The sweet and bashful maiden of my hopes and desires is transformed into a repellant and mendacious flirt. The dream is past—and—what an escape! If Tony had called me one short hour earlier, I should now be married,—have flung away my whole future, and to-morrow—what an awakening to misery and disappointment! Thank goodness I have been saved that bitterness! If there be any young men like myself present, beware of three things:—Rockaway Beach, moonlight and stray sirens. (*Jumps into bed, thrusts head out between the curtains.*) But, by the holy poker, that was A CLOSE SHAVE.

CURTAIN.

LIVING PICTURES AND TABLEAUX.

By Fannie M. Steele.

Living pictures, or tableaux, of the size of easel pictures, are to be shown as if hanging in an ordinary frame.

These may be arranged with charming effect, and may be shown in a small public hall, or a large parlor with very simple appliances. Of course all the beauty depends upon the judicious use of color, and upon a sufficient but still a rather mysterious lighting.

THE PICTURE FRAME.

In the first place, a gilt, or walnut and gilt, picture frame must be hung in a common doorway, or between two sliding doors closed to the size of the frame, while the space above and below is covered with material of some dark color. The whole wall, or the doors which represent the wall, should also be covered with the same dark color. The picture frame must be hung just so high that by standing on the floor the head of an adult will be in the centre of the frame. Now fasten a wire across the audience room three or four inches in front of your frame. This will hold the curtain, which should be suspended from it with rings. The curtain should be of thick material. (*See "Inner Mat."*)

THE SCREEN.

Behind the picture frame you will need a firm, high screen made of two uprights of scantling, with a cross-piece on top, and another half way down to strengthen it, and feet to widen the base. This screen should be nine feet high, at least; so high, at all events, that, when seated in the front row of seats and looking through the frame, an observer will not be able to see the ceiling beyond. This screen is to hold the materials which form the background of the picture. When the figure is posed, the screen is to be pushed as close to figure and the picture frame as possible, to avoid the appearance of depth to the picture; that is, to make the living figure appear as if it were a painting on a flat surface.

THE INNER MAT.

We will say that the opening of the frame is thirty inches by twenty-four. Thirty-six by thirty would be better. That may be too large for some of the figures you would like to represent. An inner "mat," as it is called, made of thick paper with light strips of wood across each end, will be useful. Two screw-eyes at the upper corners, corresponding with two screw-hooks in the frame proper, will allow the mats to be easily adjusted. These mats may be covered with gilt paper, the outer rim corresponding with the inner rim of the frame; that is, thirty by twenty-four inches, or thirty-six by thirty, the inner opening being either an oval or a square with rounded corners. This arrangement changes the size and varies the shape of the pictures.

As to the frame itself, if nothing better is at hand, one may be made of pine and covered with brown muslin and gilt paper, imitating a walnut and gilt picture frame. This will be sufficiently good, as the light is to fall only on the picture in the opening, and the audience-room would be dark.

THE LIGHTING.

Now for the lighting, which is the most important of all. It is best to have a magic lantern so placed in the back of the room that a square of light shall fall upon the opening in the picture frame. An engine head-light will answer a good purpose if its light is bounded by a square opening, so that it throws a square light instead of a circular one. Also a fair arrangement would be two or three bull's-eye lanterns, placed in a close group on a firm, high stand near the frame, a little to the left in front, these so adjusted that their light will fall upon the opening in the picture frame. If the last means of lighting is used, it will be necessary to supplement it by the use of a bracket kerosene lamp, with reflector, so hung that its light will fall upon the person posed in the picture frame, the light falling through the space between the frame and the screen which is to form the background. Of course this lamp and reflector must hang in the room beyond the picture frame. The light must not be *too* intense, as *some* shadows are needed upon the face for beauty. Lights from both sides at once throw cross shadows which are ruinous to

good looks or artistic effect. Light from above is good if it can be screened from the view of the audience, who are to sit in the dark.

THE MANAGERS.

First, a chief, who shall stand outside the frame in the audience-room, pose the models for the pictures, decide about the colors, ring the bell for music, as well as draw the curtain, enveloping himself in its folds as it slides back.

Second. Head of the dressing-room, who shall, at the beginning of the evening, take care that the costumes are complete, each group of articles laid by itself, and ticketed according to the numbers of the programme, 1, 2, 3, etc. It should be his business to see, also, that the models for at least three pictures ahead should stand dressed and waiting: this to avoid the tiresome delays that occur between tableaux.

Third. Manager of the background shades, who shall remove one background and supply the next expeditiously. A step-ladder or some firm boxes will be needed for this purpose.

Fourth. A musician, who should have his notes placed in the order required on the piano, which should stand behind scenes.

Each officer should have a programme, relating only to his own peculiar duties, fastened up at his post of duty. He should understand his business thoroughly, and never turn aside from it. Then there will be no need of the noise of questions, or confusion and delay.

CONCLUDING DIRECTIONS.

When the picture is posed satisfactorily by the chief, he is to ring a bell for silence in the audience; a second bell for the music, which plays a strain or two till all are in the mood of its sentiment, then another bell, and the chief will himself draw the curtain, while the music continues till the curtain is closed for the last time. Then each officer rushes to his own work, and the next picture is soon ready for exhibition.

In the evening's entertainment here given, the names of the artists may be announced, if the original pictures are closely copied. For instance: "The Duchess of Devonshire," by Gainsborough, the portrait lately stolen; or, "Cherubs," by Sir Joshua Reynolds; or, "Betty," by Nicholls; or, "Italian Girl," by Fortuny, etc.

PROGRAMME.

PART 1.

OPENING MUSIC: A Piano Solo

Tableaux.	*Music.*
1. EGYPTIAN GIRL.	Strauss Waltz.
2. MAUDE MULLER.	Last Smile, by Wollerhaupt.
3. BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN.	A melody, by Rubenstein.
4. DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.	La Gazelle, by Hoffman.
5. EVA AND TOPSY.	Shoo-fly.
6. WHAT THE DAISY LIVED TO SEE.	We met by chance.
7. CHERUBS.	I want to be an Angel; or, Les Deux Anges.

PART II.

1. A NUN.	Ave Maria.
2. BETTY, THE MILKMAID.	Comin' through the rye.
3. ORIENTAL GIRL.	Traumerei.
4. MARGUERITE.	Airs from "Faust."
5. MIGNON.	How can I leave thee.
6. SPANISH LADY.	La Manola.
7. ITALIAN GIRL.	Il Bacio.
8. THE RESCUE.	The Erl King.

DESCRIPTION.

Costumes, Positions, and Backgrounds.

1. EGYPTIAN GIRL.

Represented by a brunette with sparkling black eyes, dressed in a cream-colored embroidered robe, bordered with deep maroon velvet, arms bare, several pairs of armlets and bangles upon them, black Spanish lace veil over hair which must be dressed very high to support it, earrings, coin necklace, coins on bands across forehead. The jewels may be make of gilt paper.

Pose. She stands with body in profile, facing left, left hand on hip, elbow straight forward. Right hand drawing veil half across her face.

Background. A Persian rug or its imitation or a gay striped pink and green bit of drapery. Use the mat with rounded corners for this picture.

It is only necessary to costume the figures to the waistline or a few inches below it. If it is impossible to copy the descriptions given, try to adhere to the colors, varying if necessary, the detail.

2. Maud Muller.

She may be a sun-burned girl with expressive dark eyes.

Dress. A pale calico waist of no particular color, sleeves rolled up. Faded Red silk handkerchief tied about the neck loosely, and a torn, wide, sun-burned, straw hat.

Pose. She leans forward on a fence, chin buried in right palm, a longing look upon her face as if the Judge were disappearing in the distance. "It might have been" in her eyes.

Background. Pale blue sky. Something made to simulate a fence and a rake handle leaning against it, at her left.

3. Blessed are they that mourn.

Composed of two figures, the first an angel, who should be a golden-haired girl with wings attached to her shoulders, and her dress or drapery cream colored. Second a brunette, pale and thin, prominent nose. She should be draped in dove color, medium tint, over head and arms like sleeves with a fold of white cambric underneath, next the face.

Pose. Angel with wings spread forward, hands expressing support, eyes uplifted, expression prayerful. This figure stands behind. The mourner kneels in an attitude of grief, hands clasped. She should seem entirely unconsious of the presence of the angel although her head touches the angel's breast, or the head may fall forward on the clasped hands.

Background. Maroon color. Mat, oval. A pedestal table will be needed to support the mourner's hands. The wings may be white muslin stretched upon a wire frame with a few touches of Indian ink wash to represent feathers.

4. Dutchess of Devonshire.

A bewitching, pretty girl in a blue silk waist (Marie Louise blue), with square neck and elbow sleeves, white illusion lace

drawn over shoulders in a point, fastened with pink flowers in front. An extremely wide brimmed hat of black velvet, turned up at one side with nodding plumes. A farmer's straw hat lined with velveteen will answer the purpose. Hair powdered and curled and fastened irregularly.

Pose. She stands facing the left, head turned toward audience. Copy Gainsborough's portrait. Do not spoil this by a dark blue dress which will not light up.

Background. Fawn color. Mat with rounded corners.

5. Eva and Topsy.

Eva in white, with long yellow curls. Topsy in burlap and wig, one coral earring in her ear. It would be far better, of course, if there was no need of wig and burnt cork.

Pose. Eva holds up her finger while chiding Topsy for stealing Rosa's earring. Topsy, grinning, turns her ear to show Eva the wonderful ornament.

Background. A light fawn color. No mat.

6. What the Daisy Lived to See.

First figure is a young man with a straw hat having a blue band, ordinary suit of clothes. Second, a young girl in blue dress, white Swiss muslin basque with black velvet sash, hat falling off, croquet mallet under her arm.

Pose. The young man stands in profile, with croquet mallet over his shoulders, looking down delightfully at the young girl who puts a daisy in his button hole, while she looks shyly but lovingly up to his face.

Background. Dark green. No mat.

7. Cherubs.

Background. A frame corresponding with the opening of the picture frame, covered with grey cambric on which are fastened clouds of white tarlatan. This hung in the frame like a mat. Before the clouds are fastened on make three openings in this background by cross cuts like the figure X, one of which should be above, and two underneath. Three little heads are to be pushed through these openings, and a pair of little wings fastened at the side of each opening.

The children must be supported at the right height by boxes; the upper head looks down and should be covered with light curls; one of the lower cherubs looks up, the other straight forward. The wings may be made of white wiggin and feathers drawn upon them. They should be fastened to the background with pins.

Or, in place of the last, the Sistine Cherubs may be represented by two pretty negro children in the attitude of the famous cherubs, and with little black wings fastened to their shoulders.

Background. A flannel blanket with two green festoon-like curtains draped across the upper corners.

This is very amusing, as the black eyes never fail to be very expressive. Since the light is directly in the face of the models, and the audience sit in the dark, it is impossible for them to recognize friends in the company, therefore, it is easy for them to hold any expression, not being confused.

PART II.

1. The Nun.

May be a mild faced blonde, with large, liquid eyes. First pin a band of white muslin across the forehead concealing all hair. Then take three yards of white cambric, using it wrong side out, and pin it round the face, pinning it under the chin; let it hang smoothly to her hips, then bring it back over her wrists and pin for flowing sleeves. A black shawl is then laid over the head and in the same way over the wrists. This is a simple way to represent a nun's dress.

Pose. Hands are lifted in prayer with a crucifix clasped in them, and a rosary hanging from them. The head thrown back, eyes tearfully uplifted.

Background. Fawn color. Mat, oval.

2. Betty.

A rosy, plump girl in light calico, with a thin white kerchief, tied above a pointed-necked dress, wide straw hat caught up at one side with poppies and daisies, short sleeves rolled up.

Pose. Body to the left, milk pail under right arm filled with field flowers, while she seems to be singing on the way.

Background. Pale blue as of sky.

4. Oriental Beauty.

A dark, sallow, black-eyed girl in a light brocade dress, red sash tied once straight about the waist, crossed behind and brought forward and tied again in front two or three inches below the waist. Red and yellow crape turban. Let her have a large, gay fan of oriental design. She is to appear seated among cushions of gay colours. Two chairs, so placed that they do not prevent the screen being drawn up close to the figure, should have a narrow board on which the model is to be posed with her feet lying toward the left, as if raising herself on her left elbow.

Background. Olive brown. No mat.

4. Marguerite.

A sweet-faced, light-haired girl, with two braids hanging down; in a white square-necked dress with chemisette tied with drawing string. The sleeves should be tight sleeves, with a pointed cuff of the same falling over the hand and puffs at the elbow.

Pose. She faces the left and holds a daisy, as if she were saying, "He loves me, he loves me not."

Background. Dark green. Oval mat.

5. Mignon.

A young girl with fluffy, black hair combed back loosely, only confined by a narrow band of red. A dark blue waist, low round neck with chemisette, and light blue apron across her lap.

Pose. Seated with elbows on knee, an expression of home-sickness, longing for Italy.

Background. A very light cold grey.

6. A Spanish Lady.

A pretty, regular-featured girl, a brunette, with red satin waist, black veil draped over high comb, little water curls at the ear, a rose at one side of hair in the veil. Fan and jewels.

Pose. She seems to have just passed through a curtain which she still holds in one hand and looks forward as if from a balcony, her fan spread in the other hand.

Background. Green, with fawn color draped across it like a curtain, drawn at one side in a festoon.

7. Italian Contadina.

A dark girl, in brown peasant waist, gay Roman apron, round-necked chemisette, white sleeves to the elbow, gold beads, a red Italian head dress made of flannel, folded about six inches wide and laid on the top of the head and allowed to hang to shoulders behind; a similar fold of white cloth is underneath of the same width. Red coral bells for ears and coral bracelets. The hair should be divided in half behind and braided, then each braid brought forward around and above the ears and fastened again behind, underneath head-dress.

Pose. As if leaning against a wall, hands folded behind head.

Background. Stone color.

8. The Rescue.

First figure is a fireman in wide, hard-leather hat and red shirt, with dingy face, descending a ladder with a little, curly-headed child tucked awkwardly under his arm. The child in a night-gown. Both figures expressive of fear and danger. The ladder must be firmly fixed close as possible to the frame. No drapery or background screen, but a few blackened boards leaning carelessly as if fallen by chance. Red fire on tin plate should be burned at the back of the screen, the illumination and smoke being very effective.

Note.—Singing may be introduced between the parts of the programme.

With this as an example many similar entertainments will no doubt be suggested. One, showing the prominent characters of the Old Testament, would be very effective and make a lasting impression.

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